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ABSTRACT

Assessed were the views of New Mexico school board members, school nurses, and elementary school counselors regarding school-age day care. Respondents were 277 board members, 214 nurses, and 96 counselors representing a response rate of 62%, 72% and 74% respectively. All three groups reported that latchkey children were evident in their district or school, and that provision of care for these children was important. Responses regarding the best type of care were mixed. Only school counselors rated public school-based programs as their first choice. Board members and nurses rated school-based programs as their second choice. Although a majority of school board members tended to support State regulation of latchkey programs and State funding of care, their support was somewhat less than that of nurses, and considerably less than that of counselors. Respondents agreed that parents were also responsible for funding after-school programs. Respondents expressed concern that funds intended for academic programs might be diverted to support after-school day care programs in public schools. In addition, respondents expressed concern that schools would be assuming increased parental responsibility if after-school programs were initiated. Appendices provide the survey instruments, related letters, and comments of respondents. (RH)

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FINAL REPORT

VIEWS OF NEW MEXICO SCHOOL PERSONNEL REGARDING SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

by

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Abstract

Concern regarding the care and supervision of children before and after school appears to be growing. This concern has been reported throughout the nation in research articles as well as in the popular press. Latchkey children, defined for this study as those children in grades kindergarten through sixth who are left unsupervised before and after school, are also evident in New Mexico.

Visibility of latchkey children has established a need for various state agencies to seek to provide assistance regarding school-age child care. Prior to establishing ways of addressing child care issues, it is important to assess the problem as perceived by persons who may be most aware of the issues and may also be in positions within school systems to help provide solutions. School personnel may be those individuals who most closely fulfill that criteria. With this in mind, the New Mexico Department of Human Services funded a project through New Mexico State University to assess the views of New Mexico school board members, New Mexico school nurses, and New Mexico elementary school counselors regarding school-age child care issues.

A total of 451 school board members, 280 school nurses, and 131 elementary school counselors were mailed an envelope containing the cover letter, an instrument adapted for the study, and a self-addressed stamped envelope for returning the instrument during January and February 1988. Respondents who completed the survey included 277 school board members, 214 school nurses, and 96 elementary school counselors which resulted in the response rate of 62%, 76%, and 74%, respectively. Responses of participants were coded, then entered into a computer file

in order to tabulate frequencies and percents.

All three groups of respondents reported that latchkey children were evident in their district or school and that the provision of care for these children was important. Yet, there was a mixed response regarding the best alternative of after-school child care. Only school counselors rated "Programs in Public Schools" as their first choice. That selection was rated second by school board members and school nurses.

Although a majority of school board members tended to support (a) involvement of the New Mexico legislature in regulating care of latchkey children and (b) involvement of the state of New Mexico in funding care for these children, their support was somewhat less than that of school nurses, but considerably less than that of school counselors. Not surprisingly, "Financial Support" was listed as the major concern in implementing school-based child care by approximately 85% of each group of respondents. Respondents agreed the major responsibility for funding after-school programs rests with "Parents of Children in Program."

One of the underlying themes recurring in several comments provided by respondents was that after-school child care conducted in public schools could diminish academic programs if financial resources are redirected to support such programs. Additionally, respondents expressed concern that schools would be assuming more parental responsibility if after-school programs were initiated.

It would be recommended that school board members, school nurses, and elementary school counselors be consulted regarding issues related to children. In addition, these groups are often in positions of decision-making and policy-making; thus their opinions are valuable and should be acknowledged.

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Introduction

The Problem

Concern regarding the care and supervision of children before and after school appears to be growing. This concern has been reported throughout the nation in research articles as well as in the popular press. Latchkey children, defined for this study as those children in grades kindergarten through sixth who are left unsupervised before and after school, are also evident in New Mexico.

The visibility of latchkey children has established a need for various state agencies to seek to provide assistance regarding school-age child care. Prior to establishing ways of addressing child care issues, it is important to determine the breadth and depth of the problem. It is particularly helpful to assess the problem as perceived by persons who may be most aware of the issues and may also be in positions within school systems to help provide practical solutions. School personnel may be those individuals who most closely fulfill that criteria.

Need for the Study

In New Mexico some assessment has been made of the views of educators and other persons closely associated with education regarding child care issues. One study, funded by the New Mexico Department of Education, Vocational-Technical and Adult Education Division, administered instruments to New Mexico school superintendents, elementary school principals, home economics teachers, and state legislators (Love, Ward and Cummings, 1987). Although these four groups may be in a position to provide important information about child care issues,

additional study provides New Mexico with more comprehensive data than is available in most other states.

Objectives of the Study

With this in mind, the New Mexico Department of Human Services funded a project through New Mexico State University to determine the attitudes of additional educators. The objective of this study was to assess the views of New Mexico school board members, New Mexico school nurses, and New Mexico elementary school counselors regarding school-age child care issues.

Delimitations of the Study

Analysis of attitudes of New Mexico school board members, New Mexico school nurses, and New Mexico elementary school counselors was limited to information provided by respondents. This information was collected on instruments developed for the study and administered during January and February 1988.

Limitations of the Study

Application of results of this study may be made to those subject groups under investigation. The subject groups include New Mexico school board members, New Mexico school nurses, and New Mexico elementary school counselors.

Assumptions of the Study

For purposes of this study it was assumed the responses provided by the subjects accurately represented their attitudes. In addition, it was assumed the instruments were reliable and valid measures of the attitudes of the populations under investigation.

Review of Literature

Introduction to the Problem

The idea of children needing care by someone other than their parents has been in existence for many years. The number of children under 13 years of age in self-care has been growing steadily since World War II. This increase is primarily a result of the greater percentage of mothers of children in the labor force. In 1940, 8% of mothers with children under 18 years of age were working outside the home. The National Commission on Working Women reported that in 1986, 70% of mothers with children ages 6-13 were participating in the labor force. Today, only 25% of families with children are composed of the father as the wage earner and the mother at home with children under 18 years of age (Wallis, 1987).

The reasons for this development are numerous; but perhaps the two most prevalent reasons are the increasing numbers of two-paycheck families and single-parent households in the United States. Pecoraro, Theriot, and Lafont (1984) noted that as more mothers join the labor force for economic or personal reasons, care for children becomes a major concern. They also reported that the increase in divorces and the growing occurrence of single mothers has added to the number of single-parent households. Verzaro and Hennon (1980) pointed out that single-parent families, especially those headed by women, have significantly

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Note: Melinda Tellez, Graduate Research Assistant, researched and wrote the Review of Literature

lower incomes. Yet, as indicated by Stickney (1981), day care for school-age children is scarce and expensive. The consequences of this may be that the parent(s) cannot afford after-school care for their children and must allow them to return to their homes alone.

Working parents often have difficulty finding appropriate child care for school-age children (Adams and Strupp, 1984). The availability of school-age child care programs is limited. The reasons for the school-age child care programs that are in existence today tend to be varied. Some programs are merely babysitting programs with little direction or interaction. Other programs are educationally oriented and are used to supplement school experiences or serve as a remedial experience. Still others are developmental programs designed to develop each child's potential (Stickney, 1981). Ultimately, the vast majority of programs, according to Long and Long (1981), were designed for children under the age of five.

History of Latchkey

The term latchkey has been in use for hundreds of years. The meaning, however, has changed. Long and Long (1983) noted that in the eighteenth century, a latchkey was a device used to open a door latch. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, latchkey described single, unchaperoned women who used a key to gain access to their homes. According to Rowland, Coleman, and Robinson (1986), Zucker used the term latchkey in regard to children as far back as 1944. It was used to describe young children left to care for themselves while their parents worked. The distinguishing mark of such children was a key, tied on a string and hung around their neck.

Present licensing of child care facilities is primarily for pre-school ages, as opposed to school-age children, with each state setting their own standards and enforcement policies (Rooney, 1983). According to Rooney (1983), the federal standards for child care services were eliminated in 1981 by the Reagan Administration. Rooney also stated that new standards imposed by the states are often deficient or restricted in their applications.

Status of Latchkey Programs

Strother (1984) noted that staff of the School-Age Child Care (SACC) Project at Wellesley College are leading promoters of school-age child care. The SACC Project has been conducting research since 1979 on the types of child-care services for school-age children that are available throughout the nation. The SACC staff members also provide information and technical assistance on the design and implementation of day-care programs that young school children may attend before school, after school, and during intervals when school is not in session but when parents must work. In 1980, the SACC Project staff indentified approximately 170 day-care programs for school-age children; with more than half of these programs involving public schools. Strother (1984) also concurred that public school participation in the provision of before- and after-school programs for young school children was increasing.

School involvement, however, sometimes entails only the provision of space and other resources to private groups and agencies in the nonprofit sector that administer school-based child care programs. In other instances, the schools administer the child care programs them-

selves. Among the many other options for involvement in child care that schools may select are (a) busing children to after-school programs located elsewhere, (b) offering seminars for parents on self-care practices, and (c) surveying parents in the school district regarding their child care needs.

"Status of Latch-key Program: A National Survey" by R. C. Reynolds and E. J. Ogletrie (1985), collected data regarding the status of latchkey programs in the United States. All 50 states were sent questionnaires. A letter and questionnaire was mailed to each state superintendent of schools and the secretary of the committee of the state legislature. Thirty-one questionnaires and related literature were returned to the researcher. Out of the 31 responses, 14 states indicated that they had some type of latchkey program. A number of states reported contemplating some form of "child-care," "parental participation," or "latchkey" policy as described below:

a. One of the states (Illinois) had passed legislation specifically for "latchkey" children.

b. California, New Jersey, and Nebraska had pending legislation.

c. States such as Montana, Ohio, and Wisconsin reported relying on general day-care legislation and statues on child welfare and abused, neglected, and abandoned children.

d. The legal basis for most of the latckey programs was reported as being based on local policy and resolution. State departments in Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maine, New York, and Wisconsin reported encouraging and assisting local jurisdictions in establishing latchkey programs, particularly those that were associated with ones housed in the public schools.

Data indicated that although the home-alone children problem was national in scope, resolutions have come from the "grassroots" or local community levels. However, expansion of latchkey programs will need the support of public officials - state departments of education, school districts, local and state governments, and, ultimately, federal funding (Reynolds and Ogletrie, 1985).

Funding of Latchkey Programs

The financial responsibilities for after-school programs are a major area of concern. Whether the programs should be financed by the parents of children involved, taxpayers, schools, or the government is a major question. Robinson, Rowland, and Coleman (1986) noted that operational costs are supported from a wide range of sources. Among the funding options are community groups who join forces to raise funds, local or state governments that pay a percentage of the operational costs, various foundations and businesses, and in-kind services. Sometimes funding is received from parent or parent-participation fees. In some instances, fees may be offered in exchange for parents providing some type of service to the program. Volunteers to programs also aid in keeping costs lower.

The government has been involved in financially aiding child care. Evidence of U.S. governmental support may be traced to before World War II. As reported in the School Age Child Care Fact Sheet (1986), current governmental support can be seen in attempts such as the School Facilities Child Care Act (Senate Bill 1531). The main purpose of this Act was to support the use of public school facilities before and after school for the care and supervision of school-age children and for other

purposes. The Bill was authorized for two years at 20 million dollars per year beginning in October, 1984. However, no appropriation was alloted in 1985.

Another example of financial involvement by the government was the Dependent Care Grants Program, which is a federal block grant for school-age child care and dependent care resource and referral. This program was reauthorized by Congress for four years at 20 million dollars per year. The grant began in fiscal year 1987 and will continue through 1990. School-age child care program development, improvement, or expansion is expected to receive 60% of the funds.

Senator Jeff Bingaman, New Mexico (1987), reported that the federal role in child care the 100th Congress is considering will include several measures to resolve the child care challenge. Four different approaches include:

a. Employment, training, and housing programs for low income parents.

b. Programs promoting early childhood development.

c. Relief programs for crisis situations.

d. Tax reform.

More than 30 other bills impacting child care in one way or another have been introduced in the 100th Congress, but no action has been taken. Two of these, the Family Day Care Provider Assistance Act and the Child Care Service Improvement Act, hold particular promise, according to Bingaman (1987). The first would direct the secretary of Health and Human Services to make payments to states for grants to support family day care providers and establish a National Resource

Center on Family Day Care. The second would establish a block grant program for child care services, and create an office of Commissioner for Child Care to support state offices.

These various measures indicate a strong awakening in the Congress to the child care challenge in this country. The job ahead, as Senator Bingaman reported, is to take these measures and craft a systematic and efficient national approach to the child care problem rather than the piecemeal, ad-hoc approach of the past.

Roles of School Boards in Child Care

Today, effective public education policy requires strong state school boards who willingly assume leadership roles. Increasingly, matters regarding child care may approach the responsibiliities established for school board members. Consequently, it is important for state school boards to be cognizant of their respective roles.

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) (1980) stated that a school board should be responsive to its constituencies in goverance; sensitive to the special needs of all learners in the district; act as an educational advocate for the general population, other local governmental entities, and state and federal levels of government; and be a vigorous ambassador explaining the instructional programs to the people.

To accomplish these tasks, the school board, according to the AASA (1980) must serve as a legislative body in the development and evaluation of policies. The school board must also recognize the distinction between strictly legislative and strictly administrative functions is not always clear-cut.

The board, by law, is responsible for school programs and operations. Nevertheless, all boards delegate some portion of that authority to the district superintendent. Without sufficient authority delegated from the board, the superintendent's ability to discharge responsibility is diminished. Where to draw the line of delegated authority is a matter each school board must determine and review periodically. The school board must give the professional school administrator enough authority to carry out designated responsibilities, and the administrator must give the school board adequate assurance that the job the school board designated is being accomplished.

The School Board's specific responsibility, according to the American Association of School Administrators (1980), is to give the superintendent the benefit of the board's counsel in matters related to individual board members' expertise, familiarity with the local school system, and community interests. Ultimately, those matters may include issues related to the after-school care of latchkey children.

Methods and Procedures

The objective of this project was to assess the views of New Mexico school personnel, specifically school board members, school nurses, and elementary school counselors, regarding school-age child care issues. In order to meet that objective, several methods and procedures were followed and are described below.

Selection of the Subjects

The population under investigation for this study included all New Mexico school board members, New Mexico school nurses, and New Mexico elementary school counselors. Names and addresses for all New Mexico school board members were obtained from the New Mexico School Board Association Directory (New Mexico School Board Association, 1987). Listings for school nurses were supplied by the State Supervisor for Health Occupations, New Mexico Department of Education, Vocational-Technical and Adult Education Division (B. Creighton, personal communication, July 15, 1987). All New Mexico school nurses were utilized in the study rather than limiting the population to elementary school nurses. Since in many New Mexico communities, school nurses practice in more than one school (i.e., grammar school and high school), it was decided to include all school nurses as potential subjects. Finally, data regarding elementary school counselors were provided by the Guidance and Counseling Education Consultant, New Mexico Department of Education (C. S. Bivins, personal communication, July 7, 1987).

Development of the Instruments

Instruments utilized for this study were adapted from ones developed for a previous study funded by the New Mexico Department of

Education, Vocation-Technical and Adult Education Division, and conducted at New Mexico State University (Love, Ward, and Cummings, 1987).

The survey asked for responses concerning (a) evidence of latchkey children, (b) importance of care for latchkey children, (c) best after-school care of latchkey children, (d) support for school-based child care, (e) legislative involvement in regulating care of latchkey children, (f) state involvement in funding care of latchkey children, (g) responsibility for funding child care programs, (h) anticipated impact of latchkey programs on school district, (i) alternatives of addressing the care of latchkey children, (j) approximate numbers of students in district (or school[s]), (k) community options for after-school supervision of children, (l) school curriculum related to self-care by children, and (m) concerns of implementing school-based child care programs. In addition, space was provided for the respondent to make written comments.

Instruments for all three groups of subjects were the same except for questions 1 and 10. In these questions, the instrument developed for school board members made reference to the population of their school district as opposed to a specific school(s). Copies of the instruments for all three respondent groups are provided in Appendix A.

Administration of the Instruments

A total of 451 school board members, 280 school nurses, and 131 school counselors were mailed an envelope containing the cover letter and instrument in booklet form, a self-addressed stamped envelope for returning the instrument, and a pen to complete the survey and then keep as a small gift for their contribution to the research. The instruments

were sent during January 1988. A follow-up cover letter (Appendix B), a copy of the original instrument, and a self-addressed stamped envelope were sent during February 1988 to those individuals who failed to respond to the first mailing. Additionally, thank you letters were sent to those individuals who responded to the study (Appendix C).

Treatment of the Data

A coding system was developed to record the responses to the instrument. This data were input into a computer file. Frequencies and percents were computed on the data for all questions by respondent group. In addition, cross tabulations were performed when appropriate.

Results and Analysis

The objective of this study was to assess the views of New Mexico school personnel; specifically, school board members, school nurses, and elementary school counselors regarding child care issues. In order to meet that objective, an instrument was developed and distributed to 451 school board members, 280 school nurses, and 131 elementary school counselors.

Response of Subjects

Those who responded to the first request to complete the instrument included 207 school board members, 182 school nurses, and 77 elementary school counselors. An additional 70 school board members, 32 school nurses, and 19 elementary school counselors responded after the second mailing. A total of eight instruments were returned unopened, including one addressed to a school board member, five addressed to nurses, and two addressed to counselors. The final response rates consisted of 62%, 76%, and 74% for the school board members, nurses, and counselors, respectively.

Respondents were requested to circle the letter which best described their responses to 10 questions regarding child-care issues. An additional three questions allowed for more than one response to each question. In cases when respondents replied with more than one answer, even though only one response was requested, their answers were grouped under the category of "Multiple Answer."

School District or School Population

As expected, school board members (N=277) reported they repre-

sented school districts which tended to have student populations that were variable. However, the largest concentration of students (24.5%) was in the population category of 2501 or more (Table 1). School nurses (N=214) reported their school population tended to be in the 501 to 1000 range with some variation just above and just below that specification. Not surprisingly, a few school nurses circled more than one response, perhaps indicating association with more than one school. The majority of school counselors (N=96) reported they practiced in schools with student enrollment falling in the 251 to 1000 ranges.

Evidence of Latchkey Children

Generally, project participants reported evidence of latchkey children in their district or school (Table 2). Interestingly, about 15% more nurses than school board members and about 15% more counselors than nurses reported latchkey children were "Very Evident" or "Somewhat Evident." Not surprisingly, school counselors and nurses reported a greater awareness of latchkey children as compared to school board members. The former is more likely to deal with issues related to latchkey children on a daily basis. The number of responses in the categories of "No Response" and "Do Not Know" for nurses may indicate lack of contact with the problem as well as indicating that the respondent works exclusively in secondary schools.

Provision of Care for Latchkey Children

Responses regarding the provision of care for latchkey children tended to follow a similar trend as for the evidence of latchkey children. The percent of school counselors, nurses, and board members who rated the provision of care for latchkey children as "Very

Table 1

Number of Students in Districts and Schools

Student Population	Frequency	Percent
	School Board Members (N=277)	
Districts		
100 or less	16	5.8
101 to 250	53	19.1
251 to 500	47	17.0
501 to 1000	46	16.6
1001 to 2500	34	12.3
2501 or more	68	24.5
No Response	13	4.7
	School Nurses (N=214)	
Schools		
100 or less	5	2.3
101 to 250	16	7.5
251 to 500	41	19.2
501 to 1000	72	33.6
1001 to 2500	49	22.9
2501 or more	13	6.1
Multiple Answers	6	2.8
No Response	12	5.6
	School Counselors (N=96)	
Schools		
100 or less	2	2.1
101 to 250	8	8.3
251 to 500	41	42.7
501 to 1000	35	36.5
1001 to 2500	6	6.3
2501 or more	1	1.0
No Response	3	3.1

Table 2

Evidence of Latchkey Children

Evidence	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Very Evident	27	9.7
Somewhat Evident	141	50.9
Not Evident	85	30.7
Do Not Know	20	7.2
No Response	4	1.4
School Nurses (N=214)		
Very Evident	72	33.6
Somewhat Evident	92	43.0
Not Evident	32	15.0
Do Not Know	6	2.8
Multiple Answers	1	0.5
No Response	11	5.1
School Counselors (N=96)		
Very Evident	42	43.8
Somewhat Evident	45	46.9
Not Evident	6	6.3
Do Not Know	1	1.0
Multiple Answers	1	1.0
No Response	1	1.0

Important" or "Somewhat Important" were 96.9%, 89.3%, and 76.2%, respectively (Table 3). The number of respondents who reported the provision of care was "Somewhat Unimportant" or "Unimportant" was highest for the board members (15.8%), followed by nurses (3.7%) and counselors (1%).

Best Alternatives for After-School Care

Two of the groups of respondents showed a tendency to order the alternatives of after-school child care in a similar way. School board members and school nurses ranked "Sitter Hired by Parents" as their first choice, followed by "Programs in Public Schools" and "Day Care Centers" (Table 4). School counselors, however, rated "Programs in Public Schools" as their first choice and "Sitter Hired by Parents" as their second choice.

The category labeled "Multiple Answers" received the third highest response from counselors. Multiple answers were also checked by several of the other two groups of respondents. This may indicate uncertainty on the part of the respondents as to which type of after-school child care is the best or that more than one type of child care is acceptable. In fact, written comments provided by respondents generally reiterated that various options exist for acceptable child care. Some respondents also wrote that the responsibility of child care rests with parents or may be delegated to other family members.

Support for School-Based Child Care

Not surprisingly, data from school counselors (93.7%) indicated they generally supported school-based child care (Table 5). However, nurses supported school-based child care to a lesser degree (74.7%

Table 3

Importance of Provision of Care for Latchkey Children

Importance	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Very Important	151	54.5
Somewhat Important	60	21.7
Somewhat Unimportant	27	9.7
Very Unimportant	17	6.1
Undecided	16	5.8
No Response	6	2.2
School Nurses (N=214)		
Very Important	163	76.2
Somewhat Important	28	13.1
Somewhat Unimportant	6	2.8
Very Unimportant	2	0.9
Undecided	5	2.3
No Response	10	4.7
School Counselors (N=96)		
Very Important	75	78.1
Somewhat Important	18	18.8
Somewhat Unimportant	0	0.0
Very Unimportant	1	1.0
Undecided	1	1.0
No Response	1	1.0

Table 4

Best Alternative of After-School Child Care

Type of Child Care	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Sitter Hired by Parents	136	49.1
Day Care Centers	39	14.1
Programs in Public Schools	52	18.8
Child Go Home Alone	1	0.4
Do Not Know	10	3.6
No Opinion	2	0.7
Other	17	6.1
No Response	4	1.4
Multiple Answers	16	5.8
School Nurses (N=214)		
Sitter Hired by Parents	88	41.1
Day Care Centers	26	12.1
Programs in Public Schools	48	22.4
Child Go Home Alone	0	0.0
Do Not Know	4	1.9
No Opinion	5	2.3
Other	12	5.6
No Response	10	4.7
Multiple Answers	21	9.8
School Counselors (N=96)		
Sitter Hired by Parents	27	28.1
Day Care Centers	10	10.4
Programs in Public Schools	31	32.3
Child Go Home Alone	0	0.0
Do Not Know	2	2.1
No Opinion	2	2.1
Other	7	7.3
No Response	2	2.1
Multiple Answers	15	15.6

Table 5

Support for School-Based Child Care

Support	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Would Strongly Support	59	21.3
Would Support, Would Not Oppose	94	33.9
Would Oppose	66	23.8
Would Strongly Oppose	35	12.6
Do Not Know	16	5.8
Multiple Answers	1	0.4
No Response	6	2.2
School Nurses (N=214)		
Would Strongly Support	72	33.6
Would Support, Would Not Oppose	88	41.1
Would Oppose	21	9.8
Would Strongly Oppose	13	6.1
Do Not Know	7	3.3
Multiple Answers	1	0.5
No Response	12	5.6
School Counselors (N=96)		
Would Strongly Support	49	51.0
Would Support, Would Not Oppose	41	42.7
Would Oppose	3	3.1
Would Strongly Oppose	1	1.0
Do Not Know	1	1.0
No Response	1	1.0

indicated support as compared to 15.9% who indicated opposition), while responses by school board members were more split. Approximately 55% of the school board members favored some form of support as compared to about 46% who responded they were in opposition to school-based child care.

Legislative Involvement in Regulation

All three groups of respondents indicated the New Mexico legislature should have some involvement in regulating latchkey child care (Table 6). However, nearly 37% of the school board members indicated the legislature should remain uninvolved in regulation. As noted in the table, the order of the three highest rated responses was the same for school nurses and school counselors while different for school board members.

Legislative Funding

Responses regarding the extent of the state of New Mexico's involvement in funding the care of latchkey children received similar ratings as did the question on legislative involvement. In fact, when combining the categories of "Very Involved" and "Somewhat Involved" for school board members and school counselors, their total response was nearly the same as their response regarding legislative involvement (Table 7). A total of 152 board members or 54.8% of the board members and 72 counselors or 75% of the counselors supported some form of legislative involvement in funding. "No Response" was indicated by only 3.6% of the school board members.

Table 6

Opinion Regarding Extent of Legislative Involvement in Regulating Latchkey Child Care

Involvement	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Very Involved	58	20.9
Somewhat Involved	95	34.3
Uninvolved	102	36.8
Do Not Know	15	5.4
Multiple Answers	2	0.7
No Response	5	1.8
School Nurses (N=214)		
Very Involved	52	24.3
Somewhat Involved	79	36.9
Uninvolved	48	22.4
Do Not Know	25	11.7
No Response	10	4.7
School Counselors (N=96)		
Very Involved	34	35.4
Somewhat Involved	38	39.6
Uninvolved	15	15.6
Do Not Know	6	6.3
Multiple Answers	1	1.0
No Response	2	2.1

Table 7

Opinion Regarding Extent of Legislative Involvement in Funding Latchkey Child Care

Involvement	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Very Involved	66	23.8
Somewhat Involved	86	31.0
Uninvolved	115	41.5
Do Not Know	7	2.5
No Response	3	1.1
School Nurses (N=214)		
Very Involved	49	22.9
Somewhat Involved	71	33.2
Uninvolved	64	29.9
Do Not Know	17	7.9
Multiple Answers	2	0.9
No Response	11	5.1
School Counselors (N=96)		
Very Involved	31	32.3
Somewhat Involved	41	42.7
Uninvolved	18	18.8
Do Not Know	4	4.2
Multiple Answers	1	1.0
No Response	1	1.0

Funding Responsibility of After-School Programs

School board members, school nurses, and school counselors all agreed the major responsibility for assuming funding of after-school programs initiated in the schools rests with "Parents of Children in Program" (Table 8). Agreement with this ranged from approximately 62% to about 69%. "State Government" was the second most frequently rated choice among the groups. Surprisingly, "Local Public School" was rated third by the school board members but only fourth by the other two groups of respondents. The item rated third by nurses and counselors, "Local Businesses and Industry," was rated last by board members.

Options listed by respondents under the category of "Other" tended to include combinations of responses listed as alternatives on the questionnaire. Frequently, those who checked "Other" added that parents and state agencies together should provide funding for after-school programs. Some participants suggested "Parents of the Children in the Program," "Public Schools with Local Funds," "Local Businesses and Industries," and "State Government" should all play a role in financially supporting programs.

Impact of School-Based Child Care in District

The majority of school counselors (55.2%) indicated the impact of a school-based program for the care and supervision of latchkey children would positively impact their school district (Table 9). A larger proportion of school board members and school nurses reported they expected some positive and some negative results. These two groups tended to have higher responses in the "Do Not Know" category as well as not replying to the question.

Table 8

Funding Responsibility of After-School Progams

Responsibility	Frequency	Percent[a]
School Board Members (N=277)		
Parents of Children in Program	192	69.3
State Government	62	22.4
Local Public School	22	7.9
Local Businesses & Industry	9	3.2
Other	16	5.7
Do Not Know	10	3.5
School Nurses (N=214)		
Parents of Children in Progam	147	68.7
State Government	34	15.9
Local Public School	24	11.2
Local Businesses & Industry	30	14.0
Other	11	5.1
Do Not Know	15	7.0
School Counselors (N=96)		
Parents of Children in Program	59	61.5
State Government	26	27.1
Local Public School	12	12.5
Local Businesses & Industry	15	15.6
Other	9	9.4
Do Not Know	5	5.2

Note: Respondents may have indicated more than one.

Table 9

Impact of School-Based Child Care on School District and/or School

Impact	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Positive	70	25.3
Some Positive, Some Negative	119	43.0
No Effect	16	5.8
Negative	24	8.7
Do Not Know	34	12.3
Other	4	1.4
No Response	7	2.5
Multiple Answers	3	1.1
School Nurses (N=214)		
Positive	65	30.4
Some Positive, Some Negative	79	36.9
No Effect	11	5.1
Negative	16	7.5
Do Not Know	27	12.6
Other	1	0.5
No Response	13	6.1
Multiple Answers	2	0.9
School Counselors (N=96)		
Positive	53	55.2
Some Positive, Some Negative	26	27.1
No Effect	4	4.2
Negative	0	0.0
Do Not Know	6	6.3
Other	3	3.1
No Response	2	2.1
Multiple Answers	2	2.1

Type of School Involvement in Latchkey Child Care

The majority of school counselors (59.4%) indicated that "Establish School-Based Programs" was their first choice of how schools should address the care of latchkey children (Table 10). Nurses and board members agreed, but to a lesser proportion, 41.1% and 36.5%, respectively. The three groups did support the same second choice, "Teach Lessons to Educate Children on Self-Care," to a similar extent.

Responses specified under "Other" by school board members tended to indicate that after-school supervision of children was a parental responsibility, not a school responsibility. School nurses responded similarly to school board members, however, elementary school counselors made few comments.

Options for After-School Child Care

"Private Home Care" received the most responses as an option for after-school supervision of children by all three respondent groups. The second most frequently reported items were somewhat different (Table 11). "Day Care Centers" was the second most highly rated item by nurses and counselors. Interestingly, the second highest rating given by school board members was "After-School Activities," an option rated fourth by the other two groups of respondents.

"Other" after-school supervision options listed by respondents included relatives, parents, grandparents and other relatives, and parks and recreation programs. A few respondents wrote that parents were an option for after-school supervision of children.

Table 10

Opinions Regarding Type of School Involvement in Latchkey Child Care

Type of Involvement	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Establish School-Based Programs	101	36.5
Teach Lessons to Educate Children on Self Care	75	27.1
Do Not Know	39	14.1
Other	41	14.8
Multiple Answers	11	4.0
No Response	10	3.6
School Nurses (N=214)		
Establish School-Based Programs	88	41.1
Teach Lessons to Educate Children on Self Care	48	22.4
Do Not Know	30	14.0
Other	31	14.5
Multiple Answers	4	1.9
No Response	13	6.1
School Counselors (N=96)		
Establish School-Based Programs	57	59.4
Teach Lessons to Educate Children on Self Care	21	21.9
Do Not Know	2	2.1
Other	6	6.3
Multiple Answers	6	6.3
No Response	4	4.2

Table 11

Options for After-School Child Care

Type of Child Care	Frequency	Percent
School Board Members (N=277)		
Day Care Centers	91	32.9
Private Home Care	187	67.55
Community Organizations	45	16.2
After-School Activities	95	34.3
Church Programs	40	14.4
Do Not Know	16	5.8
None of the Above	29	10.5
Other	9	3.2
School Nurses (N=214)		
Day Care Centers	129	60.3
Private Home Care	167	78.0
Community Organizations	83	38.8
After-School Activities	74	34.6
Church Programs	45	21.0
Do Not Know	13	6.1
None of the Above	10	4.7
Other	19	8.9
School Counselors (N=96)		
Day Care Centers	67	69.8
Private Home Care	68	70.8
Community Organizations	48	50.0
After-School Activities	38	39.6
Church Programs	23	24.0
Do Not Know	1	1.0
None of the Above	8	8.3
Other	7	7.3

Note: Respondents may have indicated more than one answer.

School Curriculum Related to Self-Care

The most frequently circled response by all three groups of participants regarding curriculum content in elementary school(s) concerned lessons which prepare children for "Dealing with Strangers" (Table 12). The second most frequently indicated reponse by all subjects was "Playing with Other Children." The third highest rated item was different for each group of respondents. "Dealing with Phone Calls" was indicated by 40.4% of the school board members, "First Aid" was indicated by 40.2% of the nurses, and "Answering the Door" was rated by 53.1% of the counselors. Almost 25% of school board members and about 20% of school nurses indicated unfamiliarity with that part of the school curriculum.

Comments provided by school board members under the "Other" category included drug education and occasional programs provided by various professionals. Some members from all three groups of respondents indicated that the topics listed in the instrument may receive periodic coverage.

Concerns Regarding Implementing School-Based Child Care

Respondents were asked what concerns they had regarding implementing school-based child care. Approximately 85% of each of the three groups indicated "Financial Support" was a concern (Table 13). Other trends that emerged included a majority of each group rating "Staffing" and "Legal Aspects" as a concern. Interestingly, a greater percentage of school nurses and school counselors rated "Maintenance" a concern followed by "Community Support." Ratings for these two categories were reversed by school board members.

Table 12

Curriculum Taught in Schools Related to Self-Care of Children

Content	Frequency	Percent[a]
School Board Members (N=277)		
Dealing with Phone Calls	112	40.4
Playing with Other Children	136	49.1
First Aid	62	22.4
Staying Alone	48	17.3
Handling Fear	60	21.7
Answering the Door	92	33.2
Doing Chores	62	22.4
Handling Emergencies	86	31.0
Dealing with Strangers	138	49.8
Preparing Healthy Snacks	62	22.4
None of the Above	19	6.9
Do Not Know	69	24.9
Other	12	4.3
School Nurses (N=214)		
Dealing with Phone Calls	81	37.9
Playing with Other Children	89	41.6
First Aid	86	40.2
Staying Alone	39	18.2
Handling Fear	41	19.2
Answering the Door	69	32.2
Doing Chores	40	18.7
Handling Emergencies	67	31.3
Dealing with Strangers	121	56.5
Preparing Healthy Snacks	64	29.9
None of the Above	8	3.7
Do Not Know	42	19.6
Other	14	6.5
School Counselors (N=96)		
Dealing with Phone Calls	46	47.9
Playing with Other Children	65	67.7
First Aid	23	24.0
Staying Alone	41	42.7
Handling Fear	46	47.9
Answering the Door	51	53.1
Doing Chores	33	34.4
Handling Emergencies	45	46.9
Dealing with Strangers	67	69.8
Preparing Healthy Snacks	25	26.0
None of the Above	7	7.3
Do Not Know	7	7.3
Other	5	5.2

Note: Respondents may have indicated more than one answer.

Table 13

Concerns Regarding Implementing School-Based Child Care

Concern	Frequency	Percent[a]
School Board Members (N=277)		
Legal Aspects	144	52.0
Financial Support	236	85.2
Staffing	188	67.9
Community Support	117	42.2
Maintenance	90	32.5
None	11	4.0
Do Not Know	5	1.8
Other	23	8.3
School Nurses (N=214)		
Legal Aspects	122	57.0
Financial Support	180	84.1
Staffing	160	74.8
Community Support	94	43.9
Maintenance	108	50.5
None	4	1.9
Do Not Know	5	2.3
Other	23	10.7
School Counselors (N=96)		
Legal Aspects	47	49.0
Financial Support	81	84.4
Staffing	67	69.8
Community Support	32	33.3
Maintenance	43	44.8
None	3	3.1
Do Not Know	1	1.0
Other	6	6.3

Note: Respondents may have indicated more than one answer.

The same number of school board members as nurses (n=23) indicated they had "Other" concerns in implementing school-based programs for latchkey children. Concerns listed by school board members included insurance programs, schools assuming parental responsibilities, transportation-related problems, and misuse of facilities. Nurses listed concerns related to schools assuming parental responsibility, quality of programs, administrative support, transportation, abuse of progrms, and lack of parental support of programs. A few school counselors (n=6) made comments in the category of "Other." Those comments tended to be related to programs, transportation, and the school's already extended responsibilities.

Evidence of Latchkey Children as Related to Support for School-Based Programs

Responses regarding the evidence of latchkey children as related to responses regarding support for school-based programs were analyzed in more detail. Most importantly, respondents who indicated latchkey children were "Very Evident" or "Somewhat Evident" also tended to "Strongly Support" or "Support, Not Oppose" school-based child care (Table 14). These responses were indicated by 39% of the school board members, about 60% of the school nurses, and about 87% of the school counselors. Of importance is that approximately 16% of the school board members expressed some type of support for school-based child care even though they responded latchkey children were "Not Evident" or "Do Not Know." Responses by school nurses and counselors followed a similar trend.

Table 14

Evidence of Latchkey Children as Related to Support for School-Based Child Care

	School-Based Child Care Support													
	Strongly Support		Support, Not Oppose		Oppose		Strongly Oppose		Do Not Know		Multiple Answers		No Response	
Evidence	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
School Board Members (N=277)														
Very Evident	17	6.1	9	3.3	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Evident	26	9.4	56	20.2	27	9.8	20	7.2	10	3.6	0	0.0	2	0.7
Not Evident	12	4.3	22	7.9	33	11.9	11	4.0	4	1.4	1	0.4	2	0.7
Do Not Know	4	1.4	6	2.1	5	1.8	3	1.1	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
No Response	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.7
School Nurses (N=214)														
Very Evident	33	15.4	25	11.7	8	3.7	2	0.9	3	1.4	1	0.5	0	0.0
Somewhat Evident	29	13.6	42	19.6	8	3.7	7	3.3	3	1.4	0	0.0	3	1.4
Not Evident	6	2.8	16	7.5	5	2.3	3	1.4	1	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.5
Do Not Know	1	0.5	4	1.9	0	0.0	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Multiple Answers	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
No Response	2	0.9	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	3.7
School Counselors (N=96)														
Very Evident	26	27.1	14	14.6	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Evident	20	20.8	23	24.0	1	1.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not Evident	3	3.1	2	2.1	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Do Not Know	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Multiple Answers	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
No Response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0

Importance of Child Care as Related to School-Based Child Care Support

Not surprisingly, most individuals who rated the importance of care of latchkey children as "Very Important" or "Somewhat Important" also reported they "Strongly Support" or "Support, Not Oppose" school-based child care (Table 15). This response was given by 52% of the school board members, about 72% of the school nurses, and approximately 93% of the school counselors. Percentages of respondents who indicated the importance of care for children was "Very Important" or "Somewhat Important" but who indicated opposition to school-based child care included about 19% of school board members, 13% of school nurses, and only 3% of school counselors.

Legislative Regulation of Child Care as Related to Legislative Funding

As may be expected, most respondents who indicated the New Mexico legislature should be involved in some way with regulating child care also reported the state of New Mexico should be involved in funding care of those children (Table 16). Agreeing with those statements included about 47% of the school board members, approximately 51% of the school nurses, and nearly 67% of the school counselors. About 31% of board members indicated the state should neither be involved in regulation nor funding as did about 19% of the nurses and over 10% of the counselors.

Comments by Respondents

The back page of the instrument provided a space for respondents to add additional comments. Approximately one-half of each of the groups of respondents made comments. Those comments are given in Appen-

Table 15

Importance of Provision of Care of Latchkey Children as Related to Support for School-Based Child Care

	School-Based Child Care Support													
	Strongly Support		Support, Not Oppose		Oppose		Strongly Oppose		Do Not Know		Multiple Answers		No Response	
Importance	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
School Board Members (N=277)														
Very Important	51	18.4	57	20.6	21	7.6	12	4.3	8	2.9	0	0.0	2	0.7
Somewhat Important	5	1.8	31	11.2	15	5.4	4	1.4	2	0.7	1	0.4	2	0.7
Somewhat Unimportant	1	0.4	4	1.4	14	5.1	6	2.2	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Very Unimportant	1	0.4	0	0.0	8	2.9	8	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Undecided	1	0.4	2	0.7	7	2.5	3	1.1	3	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Multiple Answers	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.4	2	0.7	1	0.4	0	0.0	2	0.7
School Nurses (N=214)														
Very Important	70	32.7	65	30.4	14	6.5	5	2.3	5	2.3	1	0.5	3	1.4
Somewhat Important	1	0.5	17	7.9	3	1.4	6	2.8	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Unimportant	0	0.0	2	0.9	2	0.9	0	0.0	1	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.5
Very Unimportant	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Undecided	0	0.0	3	1.4	2	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Multiple Answers	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	3.7
School Counselors (N=96)														
Very Important	46	47.9	26	27.1	1	1.0	1	1.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Important	3	3.1	14	14.6	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Unimportant	0	0.0	1	1.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Very Unimportant	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Undecided	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0

Table 16

Extent of Legislative Involvement in Latchkey Child Care Regulation as Related to Legislative Involvement in Funding Latchkey Child Care

Regulation Involvement	Funding Involvement: Very Involved		Somewhat Involved		Uninvolved		Do Not Know		Multiple Answers		No Response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
School Board Members (N=277)												
Very Involved	42	15.2	12	4.3	4	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Involved	16	5.8	61	22.0	18	6.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Uninvolved	6	2.2	8	2.9	87	31.4	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Do Not Know	1	0.4	3	1.1	6	2.2	5	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Multiple Answers	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
No Response	1	0.4	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.1
School Nurses (N=214)												
Very Involved	36	16.8	14	6.5	1	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.5	0	0.0
Somewhat Involved	10	4.7	50	23.4	14	6.5	4	1.9	0	0.0	1	0.5
Uninvolved	0	0.0	5	2.3	41	19.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.9
Do Not Know	2	0.9	1	0.5	8	3.7	13	6.1	1	0.5	0	0.0
Multiple Answers	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	3.7
School Counselors (N=96)												
Very Involved	24	25.0	10	10.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Somewhat Involved	5	5.2	25	26.0	8	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Uninvolved	1	1.0	2	2.1	10	10.4	2	2.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Do Not Know	0	0.0	4	4.2	0	0.0	2	2.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Multiple Answers	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0
No Response	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0

dix D. Any words or phrases that could be used to identify an individul participant or their school or school district were deleted. In some cases, brackets ([]) enclose additions or explanations that were added to clarify the comment. However, in most cases, the comments were typed exactly as provided.

Comments by the respondents included diverse issues. Some comments were made regarding (a) financial aspects of initiating and maintaining after-school child care programs, (b) potential abuse of programs, (c) support for programs, (d) lack of support for programs, (e) concern that schools are assuming parental responsibility, and (f) quality of programs. There did seem to be a consensus of concern that school involvement in after-school child care could diminish academic programs. At the same time, several individuals commented that parents would be relinquishing their responsiblity of child care to the schools if after-school child care programs were initiated.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The objective of this study was to assess the views of New Mexico school personnel; specifically, school board members, school nurses, and elementary school counselors, regarding child care issues. In order to meet that objective, an instrument was distributed to potential project participants during January and February 1988. Respondents who completed the survey included 277 school board members, 214 school nurses, and 96 school counselors which resulted in the response rates of 62%, 76%, and 74%, respectively. Responses of the participants were coded, then entered into a computer file in order to tabulate frequencies and percents.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Results from this study provided data to draw several conclusions. First, due to the excellent response rates for each group of participants, it may be assumed there is much interest in those segments of the educational community regarding issues related to school-age child care. This conclusion was reinforced by responses recorded for many of the questions contained in the instrument. It would be recommended that school board members, school nurses, and elementary school counselors be consulted regarding issues concerning child care. Their input represents a unique familarity with issues concerning children. In addition, these groups are often in positions of decision-making and policy-making; thus their opinions are valuable and should be acknowledged.

All three groups of respondents reported that latchkey children were evident in their district or school and that the provision of care

for these children was important. These results indicate the respondents not only recognize the existence of latchkey children but also suggest that care for children is a priority. However, there was mixed response regarding the best alternative of after-school child care. Only school counselors rated "Programs in Public Schools" as their first choice of care. That selection was rated second by school board members and school nurses. In addition, although the three groups indicated support for school-based child care, school board members had a large group (46.2%) that did not respond affirmatively. Opposition by this group may be critical to the establishment of school-based programs. It is recommended that proponents of school-based programs recognize there may be mixed support among school board members regarding the initiation of such programs. Persons trying to initiate programs should be cognizant that support of school board members may be essential to the success of school-based child care.

Although a majority of school board members tended to support (a) involvement of the New Mexico legislature in regulating care of latchkey children and (b) involvement of the state of New Mexico in funding care for these children, their support was somewhat less than that of school nurses, but considerably less than that of school counselors. It may be concluded that some school board members, because of their position in local government, may more readily recognize the complexities of "legislating" child care programs and, therefore, not provide unanimous support for the concept. In addition, it could be that board members, who were the group most likely to report that school-based child care would have "Some Positive, Some Negative" impact on their school

district, might consider that impact on their community when reporting their position regarding the involvement of the state. Still, despite those responses, many school board members (approximately 37%) indicated school-based programs were their choice in addressing the care of latchkey children.

Respondents also agreed the major responsibility for funding after-school programs rests with "Parents of Children in Program." Individuals involved in child care program initiation should be aware of this expectation of the educators involved in this study. This information may be important to transmit to parents early in the program initiation stage.

Of special interest were responses to the question regarding school curriculum relating to the self-care by children. Nearly 25% of the school board members and 20% of the school nurses did not know what the school curriculum included regarding self-care. Yet, nearly the same number reported the type of school involvement in the latchkey child care issue should consist of teaching lessons to educate children on self-care. Communication by teachers with parents, school administrators, and other individuals should be encouraged in order for interested persons to become more knowledgeable about the curriculum content in the schools. The likelihood the general public is not aware of the content of school curriculum would seem rather high given the level of awareness of individuals who have direct association with the schools.

"Financial Support" was listed as the major concern in implementing school-based child care as indicated by approximately 85% of each of the groups of respondents. In addition, comments provided on

the back of the instruments reiterated that concern. Financial considerations are likely to enter most discussions regarding child care implementation. Program initiators must be prepared to responde to questions regarding financial liability from many publics. It appears that concern is shared by many individuals.

One of the underlying themes recurring in several of the comments provided by the respondents to the survey was that after-school child care conducted in public schools could diminish academic programs especially if financial resources are redirected to support such programs. Additionally, respondents expressed conern that schools would be assuming more parental responsibility if after-school programs were initiated. It is important to note that some individuals who reported favoring the initiation of school-based programs also expressed this concern. Recognition that such strong opinions exist regarding after-school child care will certainly help establish the direction that proponents of such programs must proceed in order to receive favorable backing for their efforts.

The groups surveyed in this study provided useful data regarding issues related to the care and supervision of latchkey children. Certainly the response in completing the survey and providing written comments is indicative of the importance of the New Mexico educational system to the respondents. The three groups of educators are in positions to have special knowledge about the educational system that is particularly useful to persons interested in school-age child care. These three groups, school board members, school nurses, and elementary school counselors, have demonstrated their interest in the subject matter area, as well as providing responses that illustrate the complex-

ity of the issues related to school-based child care. As program implementation is considered throughout the state, the views of these groups should be considered. Analysis of views from these groups may help guide individuals concerned about after-school child care in the direction that would be most beneficial to the community in question and to the children involved.

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Appendix A

Instrument for School Board Members

Instrument for Nurses

Instrument for Counselors

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
Department of Home Economics
Box 3470/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-3470
Telephone: (505) 646-3936

January 11, 1988

Dear School Board Member:

Interest in New Mexico regarding the after-school care of elementary school children appears to be growing. New Mexico's Department of Education, Vocational-Technical and Adult Education Division, and the Department of Human Services have funded a study to obtain data regarding this issue. Researchers in the Department of Home Economics at New Mexico State University are conducting a state-wide survey regarding the after-school care of children in grades kindergarten through sixth.

As a school board member your opinions on this topic are essential. We would appreciate your responses on the following survey to ensure representation of your district in this statewide effort. Responses to this survey will be treated confidentially. No individual participant or district will be identified.

Please complete the survey and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by January 25, 1988. We have enclosed a pen for you to use to complete the survey. The pen is yours to keep as a small gift for your contribution to this study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Annette A. Ward
College Assistant Professor

NMSU
1888 Centennial Celebration 1988

STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT ON LATCHKEY CHILDREN

For this study, latchkey children are defined as children in grades kindergarten through sixth who are left unsupervised after school until an adult comes home from work.

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1-10: CIRCLE THE LETTER WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1. Recently there has been attention regarding the care of latchkey children after school. How evident is the latchkey child in your district?

   A. VERY EVIDENT
   B. SOMEWHAT EVIDENT
   C. NOT EVIDENT
   D. DO NOT KNOW

2. Which of the following best describes your attitude regarding the importance of the provision of care for latchkey children?

   A. VERY IMPORTANT
   B. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
   C. SOMEWHAT UNIMPORTANT
   D. VERY UNIMPORTANT
   E. UNDECIDED

3. In your opinion, which of the following is the best after-school care for children in grades kindergarten through sixth of working parents?

   A. SITTER HIRED BY THE PARENTS
   B. DAY CARE CENTERS
   C. PROGRAMS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
   D. CHILDREN GO HOME ALONE
   E. DO NOT KNOW
   F. NO OPINION
   G. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

4. Some working parents elect to have their children (in grades kindergarten through sixth) go home alone after school. To what extent would you support school-based programs for the care and supervision of these children?

   A. I WOULD STRONGLY SUPPORT
   B. I WOULD SUPPORT (I WOULD NOT OPPOSE)
   C. I WOULD OPPOSE
   D. I WOULD STRONGLY OPPOSE
   E. DO NOT KNOW

5. To what extent should the New Mexico legislature be involved in regulating the care of latchkey children?

   A. VERY INVOLVED
   B. SOMEWHAT INVOLVED
   C. UNINVOLVED
   D. DO NOT KNOW

6. To what extent should the state of New Mexico be involved in funding the care of latchkey children?

   A. VERY INVOLVED
   B. SOMEWHAT INVOLVED
   C. UNINVOLVED
   D. DO NOT KNOW

7. If after-school programs were initiated in the public schools, who should assume the major responsibility for funding?

   A. PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN IN THE PROGRAM
   B. PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH LOCAL FUNDS
   C. LOCAL BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES
   D. STATE GOVERNMENT
   E. DO NOT KNOW
   F. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

8. If a school-based program for the care and supervision of latchkey children was provided in your school district, what would be the impact on your district?

A. POSITIVE
B. SOME POSITIVE, SOME NEGATIVE
C. NO EFFECT
D. NEGATIVE
E. DO NOT KNOW
F. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

9. Given a choice of how the schools should address the care of latchkey children, my first choice would be to:

A. ESTABLISH SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS
B. TEACH LESSONS TO EDUCATE CHILDREN ON SELF CARE
C. DO NOT KNOW
D. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

10. Approximately how many students are in your district?

A. 100 OR LESS
B. 101 TO 250
C. 251 TO 500
D. 501 TO 1000
E. 1000 TO 2500
F. 2501 OR MORE

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 11-13: CIRCLE THE LETTER OR LETTERS WHICH BEST DESCRIBE YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

11. Options for after-school supervision of children in my community are available in: (circle all that apply)

A. DAY CARE CENTERS
B. PRIVATE HOME CARE
C. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (SUCH AS BOYS' OR GIRLS' CLUBS; YWCA/YMCA)
D. AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
E. CHURCH PROGRAMS
F. DO NOT KNOW
G. NONE OF THE ABOVE
H. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

12. The curriculum for elementary school(s) in my district include(s) lessons which prepare children for: (circle all that apply)

A. DEALING WITH PHONE CALLS
B. PLAYING WITH OTHER CHILDREN
C. APPLYING FIRST AID FOR INJURIES
D. STAYING BY ONESELF
E. HANDLING FEAR
F. ANSWERING THE DOOR
G. DOING CHORES
H. HANDLING EMERGENCIES
I. DEALING WITH STRANGERS
J. PREPARING HEALTHY SNACKS
K. NONE OF THE ABOVE
L. DO NOT KNOW
M. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

13. My concern(s) in implementing a school-based program for latchkey children in my district is (are): (circle all that apply)

A. LEGAL ASPECTS
B. FINANCIAL SUPPORT
C. STAFFING
D. COMMUNITY SUPPORT
E. MAINTENANCE
F. NONE
G. DO NOT KNOW
H. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

-OVER PLEASE-

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT. PLEASE MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING SPACE.

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
Department of Home Economics
Box 3470/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-3470
Telephone: (505) 646-3936

January 11, 1988

Dear School Nurse:

Interest in New Mexico regarding the after-school care of elementary school children appears to be growing. New Mexico's Department of Education, Vocational-Technical and Adult Education Division, and the Department of Human Services have funded a study to obtain data regarding this issue. Researchers in the Department of Home Economics at New Mexico State University are conducting a state-wide survey regarding the after-school care of children in grades kindergarten through sixth.

As a school nurse your opinions on this topic are essential. We would appreciate your responses on the following survey to ensure representation of your school in this statewide effort. Responses to this survey will be treated confidentially. No individual participant or school will be identified.

Please complete the survey and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by January 25, 1988. We have enclosed a pen for you to use to complete the survey. The pen is yours to keep as a small gift for your contribution to this study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Annette A. Ward
College Assistant Professor

NMSU
1888 Centennial Celebration 1988

STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT ON LATCHKEY CHILDREN

For this study, latchkey children are defined as children in grades kindergarten through sixth who are left unsupervised after school until an adult comes home from work.

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1-10: CIRCLE THE LETTER WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1. Recently there has been attention regarding the care of latchkey children after school. How evident is the latchkey child in your school?

   A. VERY EVIDENT
   B. SOMEWHAT EVIDENT
   C. NOT EVIDENT
   D. DO NOT KNOW

2. Which of the following best describes your attitude regarding the importance of the provision of care for latchkey children?

   A. VERY IMPORTANT
   B. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
   C. SOMEWHAT UNIMPORTANT
   D. VERY UNIMPORTANT
   E. UNDECIDED

3. In your opinion, which of the following is the best after-school care for children in grades kindergarten through sixth of working parents?

   A. SITTER HIRED BY THE PARENTS
   B. DAY CARE CENTERS
   C. PROGRAMS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
   D. CHILDREN GO HOME ALONE
   E. DO NOT KNOW
   F. NO OPINION
   G. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

4. Some working parents elect to have their children (in grades kindergarten through sixth) go home alone after school. To what extent would you support school-based programs for the care and supervision of these children?

   A. I WOULD STRONGLY SUPPORT
   B. I WOULD SUPPORT (I WOULD NOT OPPOSE)
   C. I WOULD OPPOSE
   D. I WOULD STRONGLY OPPOSE
   E. DO NOT KNOW

5. To what extent should the New Mexico legislature be involved in regulating the care of latchkey children?

   A. VERY INVOLVED
   B. SOMEWHAT INVOLVED
   C. UNINVOLVED
   D. DO NOT KNOW

6. To what extent should the state of New Mexico be involved in funding the care of latchkey children?

   A. VERY INVOLVED
   B. SOMEWHAT INVOLVED
   C. UNINVOLVED
   D. DO NOT KNOW

7. If after-school programs were initiated in the public schools, who should assume the major responsibility for funding?

   A. PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN IN THE PROGRAM
   B. PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH LOCAL FUNDS
   C. LOCAL BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES
   D. STATE GOVERNMENT
   E. DO NOT KNOW
   F. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

8. If a school-based program for the care and supervision of latchkey children was provided in your school district, what would be the impact on your school?

A. POSITIVE
B. SOME POSITIVE, SOME NEGATIVE
C. NO EFFECT
D. NEGATIVE
E. DO NOT KNOW
F. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

9. Given a choice of how the schools should address the care of latchkey children, my first choice would be to:

A. ESTABLISH SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS
B. TEACH LESSONS TO EDUCATE CHILDREN ON SELF CARE
C. DO NOT KNOW
D. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

10. Approximately how many students are in your school(s)?

A. 100 OR LESS
B. 101 TO 250
C. 251 TO 500
D. 501 TO 1000
E. 1000 TO 2500
F. 2501 OR MORE

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 11-13: CIRCLE THE LETTER OR LETTERS WHICH BEST DESCRIBE YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

11. Options for after-school supervision of children in my community are available in: (circle all that apply)

A. DAY CARE CENTERS
B. PRIVATE HOME CARE
C. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (SUCH AS BOYS' OR GIRLS' CLUBS; YWCA/YMCA)
D. AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
E. CHURCH PROGRAMS
F. DO NOT KNOW
G. NONE OF THE ABOVE
H. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

12. The curriculum in my elementary school(s) include(s) lessons which prepare children for: (circle all that apply)

A. DEALING WITH PHONE CALLS
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D. STAYING BY ONESELF
E. HANDLING FEAR
F. ANSWERING THE DOOR
G. DOING CHORES
H. HANDLING EMERGENCIES
I. DEALING WITH STRANGERS
J. PREPARING HEALTHY SNACKS
K. NONE OF THE ABOVE
L. DO NOT KNOW
M. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

13. My concern(s) in implementing a school-based program for latchkey children in my school(s) is (are): (circle all that apply)

A. LEGAL ASPECTS
B. FINANCIAL SUPPORT
C. STAFFING
D. COMMUNITY SUPPORT
E. MAINTENANCE
F. NONE
G. DO NOT KNOW
H. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

-OVER PLEASE-

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT. PLEASE MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING SPACE.

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
Department of Home Economics
Box 3470/Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-3470
Telephone: (505) 646-3936

January 11, 1988

Dear School Counselor:

Interest in New Mexico regarding the after-school care of elementary school children appears to be growing. New Mexico's Department of Education, Vocational-Technical and Adult Education Division, and the Department of Human Services have funded a study to obtain data regarding this issue. Researchers in the Department of Home Economics at New Mexico State University are conducting a state-wide survey regarding the after-school care of children in grades kindergarten through sixth.

As a school counselor your opinions on this topic are essential. We would appreciate your responses on the following survey to ensure representation of your school in this statewide effort. Responses to this survey will be treated confidentially. No individual participant or school will be identified.

Please complete the survey and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by January 25, 1988. We have enclosed a pen for you to use to complete the survey. The pen is yours to keep as a small gift for your contribution to this study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Annette A. Ward
College Assistant Professor

NMSU
1888 Centennial Celebration 1988

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   A. VERY IMPORTANT
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   C. SOMEWHAT UNIMPORTANT
   D. VERY UNIMPORTANT
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3. In your opinion, which of the following is the best after-school care for children in grades kindergarten through sixth of working parents?

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   B. DAY CARE CENTERS
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   D. CHILDREN GO HOME ALONE
   E. DO NOT KNOW
   F. NO OPINION
   G. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

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   C. I WOULD OPPOSE
   D. I WOULD STRONGLY OPPOSE
   E. DO NOT KNOW

5. To what extent should the New Mexico legislature be involved in regulating the care of latchkey children?

   A. VERY INVOLVED
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   C. UNINVOLVED
   D. DO NOT KNOW

6. To what extent should the state of New Mexico be involved in funding the care of latchkey children?

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   B. PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH LOCAL FUNDS
   C. LOCAL BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES
   D. STATE GOVERNMENT
   E. DO NOT KNOW
   F. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

8. If a school-based program for the care and supervision of latchkey children was provided in your school district, what would be the impact on your school?

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B. SOME POSITIVE, SOME NEGATIVE
C. NO EFFECT
D. NEGATIVE
E. DO NOT KNOW
F. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

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B. TEACH LESSONS TO EDUCATE CHILDREN ON SELF CARE
C. DO NOT KNOW
D. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

10. Approximately how many students are in your school(s)?

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D. AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
E. CHURCH PROGRAMS
F. DO NOT KNOW
G. NONE OF THE ABOVE
H. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

12. The curriculum in my elementary school(s) include(s) lessons which prepare children for: (circle all that apply)

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B. PLAYING WITH OTHER CHILDREN
C. APPLYING FIRST AID FOR INJURIES
D. STAYING BY ONESELF
E. HANDLING FEAR
F. ANSWERING THE DOOR
G. DOING CHORES
H. HANDLING EMERGENCIES
I. DEALING WITH STRANGERS
J. PREPARING HEALTHY SNACKS
K. NONE OF THE ABOVE
L. DO NOT KNOW
M. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

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A. LEGAL ASPECTS
B. FINANCIAL SUPPORT
C. STAFFING
D. COMMUNITY SUPPORT
E. MAINTENANCE
F. NONE
G. DO NOT KNOW
H. OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

– OVER PLEASE –

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT.
PLEASE MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING SPACE.

Appendix B

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

Department of Home Economics, Dept. 3470
Box 30003
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-0003
Telephone: (505) 646-3936

Cover Letter To
Non-Respondents

January 25, 1988

Dear

The Department of Home Economics at New Mexico State University recently sent you a survey. We are soliciting views of school counselors regarding the after-school care of children in grades kindergarten through sixth.

We would appreciate your input on this project by taking a few minutes to complete the enclosed instrument if you have not already done so. Please return the completed instrument in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by February 15, 1988.

Data from this study will be confidential, and no individual participant or school will be identified. Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions regarding this study please contact Dr. Annette Ward at the above address.

Sincerely,

Annette A. Ward
College Assistant Professor

AAW/kw

NMSU
1888 Centennial Celebration 1988

Appendix C

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

Department of Home Economics, Dept. 3470
Box 30003
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003-0003
Telephone: (505) 646-3936

Thank You Letter to Respondents

February 15, 1988

Dear

Thank you very much for responding to the survey on latchkey children that was recently sent to you. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. Your contribution will provide important information for the state.

Sincerely,

Annette A. Ward
College Assistant Professor

AAW/kw

NMSU
1888 Centennial Celebration 1988

Appendix D

Comments
from
School Board Members

Comments
from
School Nurses

Comments
from
Elementary School Counselors

Comments
From
School Board Members

1. I hope the state will not pass a law that will force small school districts to hunt for monies to establish this kind of a care center. Many a time we face financial problems because just providing the basic needs is a job in itself.

2. To my knowledge we have no latchkey children in my district.

3. Our schools are already overcrowded with "programs", some good and some not so good. This would be another program that would be abused.

4. Probably the money you are going to spend on this study could hire a teacher in the state. If things of this nature are all that you do, probably a number of teachers could be hired. You apparently don't seem to realize that most of the tax resources of this state are already committed to public education and are still inadequate. Be realistic, Annette; if $1 is spent on this program, it will be $1 less spent on public education. This is a problem that those individuals who feel it is more important for the mother to work outside the home while the family has small children must deal with - not the schools, legislature, society at large or even you.

5. Possible the care of children should be the responsibility of some governmental agency rather than placing that responsibility on the public schools.

6. Too many school programs now in place apply more to elements of caring for rather than educating children. I believe school programs should concentrate on education and separate programs local, state or federal should provide these other services.

7. A. My responses to questions 5 and 6 are mutually exclusive but #5, the legislature has proven itself ineffectual in solving problems of this nature. Yet (#6) state support is essential. B. Day care centers for night-time adult students would improve participation and attendance.

8. Looked upon by authorities as to if their lack of concern isn't child abuse! I feel that we in schools have enough problems just teaching basic classes that we don't need to step into personal related problems that belong to parents. It's not our place.

9. I realize latchkey problems are very serious in the United States and in some areas of New Mexico. It isn't percentage wise that big a problem in our school district. I would hate for one school district to become involved in a baby sitting service.

10. As a board member, I am very concerned with the loss of local control. Due to our financial situation we could not fund this program and therefore the state would have to. Due to this fact I believe it is time for the State Government and the Federal Government to quit trying to be everything to and for everyone.

11. This is a small, rural district -- few working mothers. I can see a need for these programs in an urban setting, but [not] in a rural one. I oppose any additional funding when government at all levels is financially "strapped."

12. I believe that by the public schools taking over a program such as this would only add to the already existing problems of parents thinking that the schools, not them, are totally responsible for the children. The program itself, I have no quarrel with but should be handled by some other agency.

13. I would support any program in the schools to provide care for latchkey children provided the parents would assume financial responsibility for the program.

14. a. With the large percent of working parents in our state, the schools should have a program to help with children that will be alone at home after school. b. The above should be a responsibility of both the parents and the state to protect our young. c. Ways to do this:
    1. City and schools working together
    2. Senior citizens giving their time to help with kids.
    3. Parents organization working with clubs and churches.
    4. Prevent a problem before it starts.

15. The school's primary responsibility is to provide education for the children. In recent years there has been a tendency for the schools to become involved in many other aspects of a child's life: proper meals, health care, clothing, etc. More and more responsibility for the child's day is being hoisted onto the schools and is being removed from the families. It is all a part of the loss of responsibility by the family and the breakdown of the family unit. The school's responsibility should remain that of education, something that it generally can do better than the parents. Let the parental responsibilities of providing watch care for the children remain right there, with the parents. If the schools take over that task, it will only serve to further weaken the strength of the family unit.

16. I am glad to see this type of survey. We need to make the public aware that we do have kids that would be better under school care while their parents are making a living. So good luck and I hope you receive all your surveys back and they are positive. Thank you for the pen.

17. Some of the subjects [on self-care] are presented to children in the 5th and 6th grades. But on a small scale. Class time spent on these subjects is minimal. Subjects usually presented to children by school counselors.

18. I feel that it is not up to us to take care of children all day. Parents need some of the responsibility - working or not working.

19. Legislative support for the financing is very questionable in my opinion.

20. [My community has] a small consolidated school district. My belief is that in such a small community there are not too many latchkey children. There is always a neighbor or relative looking in on small children if parents have to work. I think children should be taught self-care and how to handle emergencies at home. Get children interested in after school activities such as youth center, 4-H club and others. The money should be used for other programs which are badly needed.

21. In my area where we make our home several of our neighbors are several parents that have to hold two jobs just [to] make end[s] meet. When the children come from school we as concern[ed] neighbors take turns in keeping the kid until [their] parents can come home from [their] jobs.

22. I am a member of the School Board [in my community]. On my initiative we introduced a pilot after school program at 2 schools and attempted to expand it to 2 more schools this year. The program has survived at only one of the schools where more affluent students are enrolled. The program's fate appears to be closer related to how it is financed. Despite proven need (based on parent surveys), it remains true that parents will not participate if they deem the program too expensive. I am most interested in this topic and would be happy to speak with you further about it.

23. I very strongly believe that mothers should stay home with their children and not work (outside the home) if at all possible.

24. I believe this will help children across the State of New Mexico. I sincerely hope that our state will truly give this program consideration for the safety and well being of the children now and of tomorrow.

25. In this district there is need. I feel that there are qualified personal to operate a care center here. I would be glad to serve on this project both local and state wide.

26. This problem probably exists, however -- must all problems be solved by attaching to the taxpayers free tit??

27. Schools are on short budgets now. The people (parents) have to be responsible for their own children. The schools cannot become babysitting services.

28. This is a very rural area. This problem is very rare in our district. Almost every instance of young children at home alone could be solved very easily here. Sorry I can't be more helpful.

29. We live in a rural area where jobs other than self employment [are] very scarce. Therefore, children can work along with parents after school. Also we bus as far as 80 miles one way in two directions. This problem seems to take of itself because of these things.

30. Due to the size and rural nature of our school, transportation would be a problem. Also we have so few latchkey kids here, I don't think a program could be justified.

31. We live in a very sparsely populated district. Most of our children ride a bus to and from school. We do not have a problem. Latchkey children come under the responsibility of parents.

32. Every child deserves proper care and supervision from someone. It seems that as time goes on more and more agencies outside the home are being called upon to assume too great a share of this child-care responsibility. I do not believe that the State, Community or school can now or ever be "all things to all people." This responsibility, after all, must be the obligation of the individual families.! Good luck on your survey. Thanks for the pen.

33. I do not care to have more programs mandated by the legislature as they cannot fund SB106. I also think it should be a local issue but definitely feel state funds must be provided if a program is mandated by the state.

34. Question #12 - Don't know if [self-care is] part of curriculum, but have seen evidence of most topics. Could be teacher concern as opposed to curriculum.

35. Parents should be responsible for part of the expense by paying a fee to take care of their children. Latchkey children should never be left alone.

36. I feel that our school districts have enough to do in educating our kids that we shouldn't be made to baby sit kids after school. I am concerned about the problem but maybe the state can come up with something and the parents would be responsible.

37. I feel it is the parents' responsiblity to take care of their children. In some cases outside help may be needed but in most cases the parents can afford to hire help. Many career oriented mothers are busy working for self satisfaction and getting ahead. Their children are their responsibility. The government or the state isn't responsible for their children. Too long have we taken responsibility for other people's children. Where have all the

mothers gone!! There are some cases I know that need help - single parent situations, etc. I would like to help them but I'm opposed to making it easier for parents who are already escaping their parental responsibilities. Many of these parents drive new cars, live in nice houses, dress great but won't spend extra on their most prized treasure - their children. Parents who are struggling and don't help - yes. I might help. The child is the most important factor, of course, and I feel for these children. I'm for maybe providing help for the children but make the parents responsible. I'm for it only for the children's help.

38. This situation is not that evident in our school district. Perhaps because parents are making provisions for the situation. It should be the parents' responsibility to see that these children are safe, perhaps with a neighbor. This practice is how I know is being handled in some instances in our district.

39. There have been cases where latchkeyed students have disappear[ed] from the streets and up to date nothing has been recover[ed] regarding them! If proper attention and supervision should've been implemented, this could have been avoid[ed] to some great extent. I endorse more protection for latchkey children. Thanks for calling on me.

40. Latchkey children would not be a problem if our economic structure within our state and country were sound. This is definitely not an area in which we need more government policy!

41. I do not think that this responsibility should be a school function at all. Schools are not (or should not) be day care centers nor should teachers be babysitters. I don't feel that programs should be funded by county, state or federal governments that doesn't help all children in public schools. Public schools spend more moeny on special education students than other students. I feel that ordinary students see whats going on in public schools. That's what wrong with public education.

42. I would like to know more about the problem in larger areas. My answers are in respect to a small community.

43. I think if parents want care provided for their children, they should pay for it.

44. Small school districts are having a hard time now financially. If this becomes law, the state will have to fund it entirely and we can't afford more taxes. The parents have to find a good solution themselves. The state and school districts cannot support the latchkey children.

45. Since many mothers of school age children work outside the home in my community, we have a problem with "latchkey" children. While I think day care centers are the best answer, making their use mandatory is offensive to me as is the notion of state regulation of such centers. Those parents who choose to use the centers should be required to pay, insofar as possible, for their children's care. The school budgets can't bear such an expense.

46. I hope school based programs such as a latchkey program would not be mandated by the state, but rather that local school districts could exercise local autonomy in setting up such a program. The state could offer consultative assistance perhaps. I'm opposed to using public monies to entirely support such a program, particularly if taken out of public school operating funds (that is, out of specifically marked educational revenue).

47. We currently have a program administered by the YMCA, paid for by the parents of enrolled children, and located in the public schools. The YMCA pays a fee to the schools for maintenance and utilities costs. Personally, I would like to see the schools absorb the costs for maintenance and utilities so the YMCA could reduce the fees, making the program more available to single parents and others with limited income.

48. My community has programs run by the YMCA in 2 (out of 5) elementary schools. School space is leased on a cost recovery basis. Classroom use has been a problem due to disruption of desk contents but unused rooms and kindergarten rooms work well. Preschool care is also needed. Our experience with the YMCA has been excellent.

49. The schools have the children long enough. Parents if they want to work then its their job to seek sitters.

50. I believe your questions are very "loaded." If one does not answer in the affirmative, one probably is categorized as being anti-child care. The function of public schools is to educate - not baby sit and we as public school educators are being forced more and more just to baby sit. We are decaying morally as a nation because of the break down in the traditional family. Techers, baby sitters, day care workers, etc. can't hug or love or motivate children like the traditional family can. <u>All</u> extra programs, such as what you are seeking the public school system to furnish, take valuable time and funds away from those who genuinely want a good, sound education.

51. I think it is great someone is concerned enough to begin to take some serious steps toward some kind of solution or at least help for these children.

52. I don't have concrete data on the extent of the latchkey children. I would like to see the data. I <u>hear</u> that there is a problem but no real facts and figures. Also, what is the income base of the parents of latchkey children? I would like data if available and a copy of your findings. Thanks.

53. The school district in partnership with the local YMCA is participating in a pilot program where organized supervised activities are being provided.

54. I am concerned about these children but also know parents will default even more of their responsibilities as we take on more.

The rest of the public is not in any mood to fund increased services. I know some children need help but public education is having trouble correctly funding SB106 now. I'm not negative but wary of added programs until we get current requirements under control.

55. I agree that this issue is a problem, but I do not feel that the school, local, state or Federal government should have to be responsible for these kids. That is the responsibility of their parents.

56. The legislature is there to run the state and state problems. This is a family problem that should be handled by the family. The schools are already overloaded and underfunded. We have to provide for 3-4 yr olds that are not capable of learning. This is free babysititng. The money could be used for more educational purposes. Parents should be responsible for care of their own children and educate them about emergency procedures. My question to you is: Why is this state trying to become a Socialist State?

57. I think that there is a need, but not to be funded by taxes or government.

58. School systems should not be responsible for children all day long. The parents are responsible for their children. Don't lay that on the schools. It won't work.

59. School districts cannot afford to have an after school class for latchkey children. But I believe if the state and Federal government would come up with extra money for programs like this, school districts would go for it. Thank you.

60. In my opinion mother's first priority should be raising her children. If we make it too convenient for them to leave their children, I fear an abuse of the system.

61. I do not believe State Legislature should be involved. They are involved in too much already and have become detrimental to many communities and many aspects of education and the economics situations of our schools.

62. Schools should be used for education - not a baby sitting factory!

63. In a rural school district where I live, a program of this sort would not be economically feasible. A school district should provide an education not a day care center. Also I think that the freedom of citizens would be infringed upon by the state trying to play the classic example of big brother. Thank you.

64. We started a program for breakfast in two elementary schools to be staffed by parents of those involved. The long term result was disappointing. The continued decline in the family unit is causing a burden on the educational system which cannot be managed. This country should have already learned with previous experiences, that

you cannot legislate a value system. The direction must be back toward the home and the parents to provide breakfast, care after school, respect for authority, self discipline, self worth. The next step will be overnight care and the parent won't be bothered at all.

65. I think the project as worthy of consideration, however with the financial status of our state it probably would have to be a local effort.

66. At a time when public education in New Mexico is struggling to avoid teacher cuts because of lack of funding, I would not even consider instituting a new program that would further drain our funding. There has to be some way to make parents realize that they are responsible for their children after school. I would not support another babysitting program.

67. I feel the cost of the program for the help involved would be too great.

68. Our district contains a very high percent of single working parent and two parent working families. These people drive a minimum of 25 miles one-way to their jobs. These people are not available to their children for 2 - 2 1/2 hrs after they are dismissed from school. These parents are not employed in high paying positions; they are barely making ends meet and cannot afford high priced private care. In our community this is all that is available. We don't have day care centers, only senior citizen centers.

69. This is a problem, but in a depressed area there are not many latchkey kids. After school activities such as tutoring would be helpful to the students as well as the parents. Let's hope the legislature will address this more openly since it has become a problem, especially in urban areas.

70. I realize lathckey children need help but not with public money. Liabilities for public or school supported care is too great and too costly. (This is a lawsuit happy society we live in).

71. As far as I know we don't have any problems like this in [my community], at the present time. I foresee some problems in the future.

72. While I recognize the need, I fear this is another area that is being pushed on Public School Systems and I am real concerned about the funding source. In no way do I think we should use funds intended for public education. Parents using service should be expected to pay. Would we not be better off to offer tax credit for the mother to stay home? Many are working not because of need but of choice.

73. I feel the first responsibility is that of the parents - Public schools at the present time have all they can handle (with the present funding) in educating children without getting involved in parental services.

74. I feel that this type of care is not only necessary but vital. Our children are taken care by individuals in trailers. I don't know how many are licensed and regularly checked. In my experience, I have been greatly disappointed. Count on me for anything that you may need. I am 100% in favor of this program.

75. Program could be implemented through parents at each school, however, funding would have to be provided by the state legislature and transferred to school district for school runned program. In a school district such as Gadsden, the program would have to include each separate school as they are many miles apart.

76. I think after school programs may be the best solution, however, I fear regulation by the state legislature without appropriate funding. Our schools have had to cut so many good and necessary programs that we are unable to absorb anything new. We lack funding for our existing programs.

77. I really do not approve of government intervention in private lives, specifically further regulations. Especially as the government tends to regulate and then not always have or provide for funding. I do think a program educating latchkey children on self-care would be helpful.

78. This should be the parents' responsiblity and not the school district or state.

79. There are some things that parents are responsible for. Care for their children after school is one of them.

80. Currently, [my community] offers one school based program, with two others looking at it for next year. I hate to see the schools getting into day care but it is inevitable. We must do the best job we can and at the present time, the programs must be self funded. I worry that the state will start demanding it of us with all it[s] attendant regulations. That would be another intrusion on local control and our ability to fashion a program that is responsive to our community needs.

81. We have one school based program that is working very well. Maybe you would like to check with our superintendent for more information?

82. We have started a latchkey program in our district in one of the elementary schools. We are looking to expand the program for next year. The parents are paying for the service.

83. Sadly our children do suffer, but by making day centers, etc. only makes parents more prone to shift their responsibility to someone or something else. Government should stay out of babysitting chores.

84. Financial burden for most districts would force them to rely on state funding for the total cost of this program.

85. I am concerned about latchkey children -- however, I feel that this is not the responsibility of a local school district. It's a personal family problem and should not involve the public schools.

86. I think that the parents are the ones that should take that responsibility and not the state or schools. We, the parents, have to take care of our children. We are the parents of 5 children and we would not put that responsibility on somebody else. Each parent should take care of their own kids after school hours, not the state or schools.

87. Most of the kids in this district have to ride a bus from 5 to 45 miles. As a result, I don't see that a program would be of much benefit to us, however, I feel that in districts where the kids aren't far from the school a program would be great.

88. I see no need in the public school system to be involved with this problem. The parents are the ones responsible for their actions. I strongly advise to let the school system stay away from this personal problem.

89. Due to the low income of many single parents, it is somewhat impossible to address the latchkey children as a school problem, but a social/economic problem, with all areas to be equally addressed.

90. I do not feel that latchkey children should be the responsibility of the school district or the Legislature. In rural schools this could be an expense the district could not afford. Children already spend a majority of their day in school and should not have to spend additional time there waiting for their parents. It is not the legislature's responsibility to regulate care for these latchkey children; it is the parents responsibility. Schools are funded by our tax dollars to educate our children; providing additional care puts undue expense on the schools to keep the facilities ready for educational purposes. The push in recent years has been "back to basics" and reform, seeing that we educate our children and cut back on many of the "extras" provided by many schools. In light of that philosophy taken by the legislature, I feel that after school care for latchkey children would be in conflict with SB106, extra expense school districts cannot afford, undue responsibility on the legislature and increased expense on the public.

99. I feel that parents who work should take the responsibility for the care of their children. Some parents feel that one of them should not work because the children need them at home during this time in their lives. It is their choice. I realize there are families where both parents have to work in order to make it but where is the line drawn? Every parent should take the responsiblity of their own child!! If they don't, then I do not know what steps would need to be taken next. That is where child neglect begins.

100. I don't believe public schools should be used as baby sitters. Irresponsible parents are the problem and they are going to be sorry, irresponsible parents whether we take care of their children or not! There is no way this would ever work wortha damn! Private baby sitters and Day Care Centers that are paid for by parents are the only answer. What about weekends and summer? What about parents that don't work but say they do? What about money? This would be nothing but a bureaucratic money trap that didn't work. Don't Do It! Thanks.

101. I don't believe the public schools should handle this social problem.

102. Parents have children. Government and the school does not. If both parents choose to work, it should be their responsibility to provide for the care of their children. Most families could live on one income if they chose to do without the extras we take for granted.

103. As you can tell, I am concerned about an additional "state" intrusion into an area that should be a family responsibility. While the welfare of the "latchkey" child has to be a concern, the state simply does not have the resources or the capability to adequately deal with the situation.

104. I am strongly against schools becoming involved in after school care of children. I believe first it is a parental responsibility and good care is available in this community. Using schools for "after school care", regardless of the program, distracts from the academic atmosphere which is essential for good learning to take place. Public schools are to educate not take the place of parents.

105. #9 -- Could create jobs for mothers who need part-time work and are available because they have children in the same age group. Schools could provide the facilities. #13 -- Where will all this end? It appears that soon the public schools will be responsible for cradle to grave care. The more irresponsible people become, the more we ask of the schools.

106. In my openion [sic], the school doesn't need to take any more responsibility away from the family unit. Don't think that I as a person don't care about these chidren, I do. But there care has got to come from a private sector.

107. (a) Given the 1986 Reform Act, New Mexico seems to be tending toward younger age admissions. (b) I believe that if the present administration's effort to implement the "Work Fare" program is successful, it will exerbate [sic] the existing latchkey program. (c) Given the public's expectations of services from Public Schools, currently TIME has become our greatest obsticle [sic] for adequate provision of these services. I believe that a serious and comp- rehensive year round school concept study shuld be initiated.

108. Let us STOP making the schools a welfare implement! Because politicians know the public will fund EDUCATION, everyone wants to lump social activities into that area. By schools now being made to take 3 and 4 year olds, it is already "baby-sitting" for parents. Then follows the complaints about the costs of education Schools should NOT be the "catch-all" for every promotion conceived! Sure, it will promote jobs for some, but education will suffer. The public does NOT want that to happen.

109. Latchkey children are usually those whose parents are unable to pay for baby-sitting that will take care of the kids until their parents arrive home.

110. A school-based program for latchkey children would be very desirable but in our small rural community and school district, there is no way funding for such a program could be available locally, either from the community or school district.

111. When state or national government give financial aid, it becomes the source of control-the mandates become too stringent and "thrattles the life" out of any programs. Grants should be given to localities and local control given.

112. I personally feel that children are the parents responsiblity, and it is up to us to make arrangements so that our children will not be alone for any period of time.

113. I believe parents should provide for there own child care. I don't believe the school should take any responsiblity in baby sitting children. I believe it is the parents responsibility. There are too many low income and fixed incomes for us to start having the government taking over such programs. I'm a great believer in self supporting of our children. I would not like it to become another burden for any school district. Education is my main concern.

114. Very difficult question that there is no simplistic answer to. The parents of most latchkey children don't have the resources to pay for care of their children at those times between school and the parents return. The majority of our students in this category have single parents. Something needs to be done. However, there has to be a limit to what the schools can do in addition to educational responsibilities.

115. State government would appropriately have a long term effect, if they educate parents of latchkey children. This is a neglect by parents for not providing care of minor children while parents are not at home. Educational materials should be made available to parents on how to start programs in communities. Public school's involvement with education should be limited to education only, not baby-sitting for parents.

116. I don't believe in doing just for a few and not doing for all. Should be parents responsiblity to care for their children.

117. I believe this is not a school problem unless we choose it to be.

118. (1) It is of more importance every day that good sound programs be established for these children; (2) They should be staffed by competent caring people under the supervision of the local schools; (3) Financing should come from state appropriations and in a lesser part from parents (based on a scale by their ability to pay); (4) In districts where there are several elementary schools, public financed transportation should be provided to gather them to a central location; (5) nourishing snacks should be provided; and (6) centers should be such that the environment lends itself to a relaxed learning atmosphere for the different age groups.

119. In my district, many are mothers (head of households) [who work] at jobs from 2 pm thru 8 pm. We have places such as Boys' Club and Day Care Centers but only the Boys' Club is opened. Transportation is the problem. Negative Attitudes: Teachers -if no pay, they feel its extra hours and punishment. Finding teachers to stay after working hours. Parents: Transportation is their main concern. Many feel better with their children at home because of better safety and children have been taught to fix their own dinner. And also do their home chores. Note: There wasn't any pen.

120. Parents should show more responsibility in caring for their children. There are children in our neighborhood left alone after school by parents who are financially able to hire people to look after them. Too many mothers are working who need to be staying home and tending their children.

121. Latchkey children's after school care is not a major problem in our district. It is a problem that is small in numbers of kids but quite large in potential problems for, and as a result of, these few kids. There are extra-curricular activities for kids, but not [for] elementary age. The problem needs to be dealt with, but I'm not sure how.

122. The need and want for love from parents to their children, the emotional support they also need will never be provided if we continue to make it easy for parents to leave their responsibility for their children in the hands of others. These needs outweigh the need of personal possessions and if not provided by the parents, our social system will continue to degenerate and our social problems will continue to rise.

123. It would be an ideal situation if the public schools could be funded to provide after-school care. However, with the present fiscal situation in New Mexico, even care programs cannot be adequately funded. Under these conditions, the best we can do is to try to teach these children how to deal with the situation.

124. I oppose latchkey programs that become the responsibility of the school. As it stands now, kids spend more of their waking time exposed to people other than their parents. We are now very close to have a whole generation of Americans who have been raised in day care centers or other non-home environments. I don't think this is a good practice.

125. I am glad the support for programs for latchkey children is becoming more evident in this community.

126. I believe this is the responsibility of the parent(s) and further believe that is is best to keep it out of the schools and let private enterprise handle it.

127. I have always believed that this country should provide free day care for children of working mothers. Given the statistics of single parent families and salary scales of women, it is an important opportunity which gives families independence from welfare and needed opportunity for self reliance and self respect. Latchkey programs are a follow-up of this need and concern. Children benefit from the care, growth and warmth given them by teachers as compared to the sense of loneliness and abandonment they might feel in a dark and cold home waiting for some companionship.

128. As time goes on, the public sector is handling more and more the responsibility of the parents. I can see in a few cases that child care after school is needed, but for special interest groups that would benefit from such programs the push will eventually destroy the responsibility of parents, <u>RICH or POOR</u>. I have had my own child take Home Economics two years ago and feel that she did not learn any basic "life skills" geared to this modern era and do not know if our district is weak in this area or the whole system of Home Economics needs revision. Thank you for the pen.

129. I'm still of the opinion that parents are or should be responsible for the supervision of their children after school. Hopefully, this program won't become another (or additional) burden place[ed] on the public schools of New Mexico. As long as the parents pay for the supervision of their children and we don't have to support this program from our operational funds, I suppose I can support it. --- Thanks for the pen.

130. I support volunteer programs not run at the school at this time. Groups who are concerned about this can utilize churches, city recreation programs, boys clubs, etc. with their own finances.

131. If we are going to provide the schools for latchkey children, then this seems to be another process where government steps in. Private care would seem to be more acceptable and certainly cheaper. Even if latchkey childrens' parents assume financial responsibility, this would undoubtedly be very cumbersome to keep track of and administrate.

132. Parents must assume responsibility for care - financial.

133. I believe that 1st and formost, children are the responsiblity of parents. I feel that after school care by the schools can become a way to get rid of the kids for a few hours, but if it does come to be, I feel it should be fully funded by the parents and not become a babysitting service.

134. I feel this is a problem and do not know the exact answer on this one. Any suggestions? Thank you for your concern. It's nice to know that someone is keeping on top of this important subject. Another important citation is complacency among parents and lack of education to parents to urge their children to go on to higher education. Also drug and alcohol abuse among parents. (By complacency, I mean lack of quality social interaction among kids and parents). I would say the #1 problem among kids and parents would be lack of information and goal setting for kids to go on to college.

135. Most students in my district live in the country. Latchkey children are not a problem that I am aware of in this rural farming and ranching community.

136. Due to the rural nature of our district, the answers in the questionnaire may not express the needs of our particular district.

137. Question #3 - All of these options are dependent on the quality of the services provided. #4 - I would strongly support school based programs as long as they would be adequately funded by the legislature. This funding could be a categorical funding for these programs. #5 - Regulations which have funding attached to them would be appropriate. Local needs should be determined and regulated locally. #6 - Very involved with sufficient funding to provide quality programs.

138. Thanks for the pen!

139. After school care for latchkey children needs to provide a relaxed time for these children who have been in a group situation all day. Programs need to be structured to give the child choices and time to find a spot for living and doing "his own thing." He/she also needs an opportunity to develop his imagination.

Comments
From
School Nurses

1. I am not a school nurse but a Public Health Nurse. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this study.

2. I work in a residential school, therefore 85% of our students live here. The few students that are all day students are taken home directly to their door.

3. My school is primarily a boarding school. In addition to this, we have a Child Development Center which provides after school care for staff children and, when necessary, for our day students. We do not, therefore, represent any kind of norm.

4. There is high unemployment in our community. It is rare in the family that both parents work. More often, the case is that there is alcoholism in many families and the parents are either intoxicated or are in town and no one is home or no one is sober. They usually have an aunt or grandmother to go to. I think there are more pressing needs in this community than the latchkey children.

5. Our student population consists of males ages 12 through 19. I feel that many of our students have been latchkey children. This is evident from their lack of supervision (delinquent history), poor nutrition, poor dentition [sic] and some, lack of personal hygiene.

6. My concern about the schools taking care of the latchkey children is that the parents would be absent more and more and let the school in essence "raise their child." A child needs the parent or parents for the most time they can have. Also if the school programs were to become humanistic, the schools could have much more time to "indoctrinate" the child.

7. I only work 32 days a school year on record. Therefore, I don't think I can answer the questions. I would have enjoyed participating in this program when I was a full time school nurse.

8. Many schools within this district are on a 4 day system meaning that our school day is much longer than 5 day systems. Most of our children whose parents work until 5:00 may stay alone or with other family members for approximately 45 mins. to an hour. Most of these kids are upper Elem.(9-12 yrs). Parents or grandparents of these children are within 5 min. time from the home. We are a small community and many of us share in the care of each others children.

9. My main concern with school based programs is staffing and funding. It seems as if the schools can barely afford to serve the children by providing public education. The legislature seems to barely be able to manage to support it financially. The staff (teachers and custodial) are stretched to the maximum amount. How can the schools take on yet another phase of child care/education?

10. I really think it'd be great if we had something like this - the kids get a lot more - they learn and parents are confident the kids are getting something out of it instead of just leaving them to watch "TV" - they are safer at school, too, with adults to supervise them - there's so much crazy things going on now I just do not know how parents can not worry about having their kids at home alone.

11. Upon thinking about it, I feel the less legislature, the better. But, indeed, we have a frightening situation for many boys and girls. Rather than nothing being done, I would like to see parents having to make sure their children are cared for in their absence and having to be responsible financially.

12. This community is small and rural. Parents are confident that it is a very safe place to live; therefore they become very unconcerned and unaware of the potential for danger to those children while they are alone. An after school program or activity would indeed benefit these children. Instead of remaining unsupervised at home, they could become involved in a stimulating program which could increase their self-confidence, safety awareness and survival skills. The problem in initiating such a program is funding.

13. I resent using school monies to fund what should be the parents responsibilities of caring for their children. They don't want us to have "sex ed" or school based clinics, etc. because we are interfering with their "rights" as parents. They should have to pay - even if the school bldgs. are used.

14. I am sorry I am returning this late. I didn't receive it until January 25.

15. I believe the primary responsibility for child care lies with parents. They need to be responsible for finding care for children after school. The schools tend to take on numerous responsibilities for parents. I feel that for the most part, parents need to be responsible for child care - should programs be funded for latchkey children, money should be sought from sources other than the public school budget.

16. We are a very small community. Most of the children that are alone after school go to a friend or relatives home, but a few do go home alone.

17. This is such a small community that everyone watches out for others children.

18. Our school nurses met together and completed the survey.

19. Questions 1-4 are difficult to answer. Each answer would depend on the individual situation. I do not feel you can generalize the category of latchkey children. A responsible 6th grader going home and staying alone is very different from an immature, careless 6th grader staying alone. Same can apply to the various age groups. Thank you!

20. For some reason - this bothers me - that the state and schools are now trying to get involved in the afterschool care of children. I really see an abuse of the system already. If parents make the decision to have children, then they need to take care of them or make arrangements to get them taken care of. I am in support of more parenting classes and classes that would educate parents in dealing with their priorities and that should be their offspring. I have a child - I make arrangements for them to be cared for while I'm at work. I sympathize with the issue but extending the schools responsibility is not the answer. Pretty soon we'll be tucking them in bed and fixing breakfast (opps! we already do that!).

21. Many of the parents care for each others children. No school driver leaves a child off at a ranch if parents are not present.

22. We live in a rural area with many 2 parent working families and we do have latchkey children. Generally the students I talk with have access to a neighbor or a relative, have things to do after school at home and parents don't just leave the kids to their own resources as a general rule. I wonder how helpful we are when we invade another area of parents responsibility with another program especially if they aren't financially responsible at least to some extent. We already work with individual cases that are a problem as we become aware of them.

23. Most of our children are bused to school. Because many work out of town, many parents do not come through town and might not desire to participate as it means more miles to pick up the child in the evening. I think education is vital for these children but having older kids at home doesn't necessary provide a stable environment. It is a big problem for more and more families but they shouldn't expect a free handout either. But if cost is involved, they probably won't participate.

24. My children (7 and 9) often attend an after-school program at their private school. They charge the parents $1.50/hr if a drop-in or $1.00/hr if by the week. This is especially helpful as they have to wait for their older brother (17) to take them home and he may have an after-school meeting. I've also used a babysitter in the home when they were younger but I know many parents cannot afford this. For this reason I think it has to be subsidized by government or someone in order to protect these children.

25. Teachers' and schools' responsibility is with education in school curriculum, not baby sitting. After school hours is parents' responsibility.

26. I deal with families everyday who want everything free and do not want their children at home. They recieve welfare for these children and I do not see that the children recieve these benefits. I do not believe it is the schools' responsibility to keep children after hours! Nor our governments!

27. We obtained 2 survey requests at our school, addressed to 2 different and past school nurses. Since there is only 1 school nurse and 1 elementary school in this community, I returned 1 survey filled out. I'm returning this blank one so you'll at least no its status and whereabouts. Good Luck! Loving Schools.

28. #12 - I don't really know how strong the related curriculum is given - it is available and has been dealt with previously at one point in time. Probably these lessons need to be made more the rule than the exception and reinforced on top of that.

29. This is our second year with such an after school program which, thus far, has been successful. We are a quite small community and there is limited available day care. Some problems do remain with those families who cannot afford the small cost!

30. I firmly believe that the parents should continue to assume the responsibility of providing after [school] care for their children. The schools are already short of funds. If this type of program were to be provided, who is going to pay for it? Will it mean less funds for education and therefore possibly effect the quality? It seems to me our state is already short of funds in most areas.

31. Children are - <u>should be</u> - the responsibility of their parents. Parents who choose to bear offspring should fit the care and rearing of their children into their careers. When both parents work, they need to take turns: being home to receive an after school child, tending the sick child, <u>playing</u> with a child on vacation. Only in these ways can children learn from their parents love, caring, role modeling, coping with stress.

32. My main concern would be for those families who most need the program but would not be able to pay for it. In my school, finances are very limited and many are undocumented workers. There is always the fear of tapping government services for fear of being deported. I would support a subsidized after school care program so that those who could pay would and those who couldn't wouldn't have to.

33. Making provisions for latchkey children certainly seems crucial and a very complex one. Responsibility for this falls on many shoulders in the community and in the state. Education of parents with regard to <u>wise</u> utilization of their children's time when supervised as well as unsupervised seems to part of the provision component.

34. The parents are the ones that need to assume the responsibility - not the schools or state. In cases where the parent is not assuming the responsibility the parents need to be educated on the importance of having their children properly supervised.

35. California has some programs and they seem to be accepted by parents, perhaps we could look at their model. I think it's a great idea and should be considered in New Mexico. Also, thanks for the pen, it's a great idea.

36. I feel parents should be responsible for the care of their own children, if that means spending extra money for their care or staying home to care for them. The schools should not be responsible for babysitting after school.

37. I realize there are problems with latchkey children. In fact, my own children fit into the category of latchkey kids. However, I do not feel it is the school's responsibility to provide this service of after-school care. The parents, if they work, need to make their own arrangements for their own children. Already so many programs have been established in the schools that alleviate the parents of more and more responsibility for raising children. Schools were established to educate children - not provide baby-sitting services.

38. I don't feel school personnel should be used for a after-school program. Qualified (certified?) people would need to be hired. Also, as soon as the school building is used, people assume the school is in charge which brings school personnel and administration into involvement. Please change contact person to: Gloria Bennett, R.N. Tami Fowler is no longer with the district. Thank you and thanks for the pen!

39. We need to educate our children more on safety in the home, 1st aid, phone calls, etc. Mainly because we do have many children that fit the category and can't see much help right now for after school care except by sitters or no supervision at all in our smaller school districts.

40. I am concerned about latchkey children. In my rural schools it is not a problem but I am from a larger city. My children attend school where there is a problem. I am not home every day when school is out and have provided other places for my children to go. It is difficult.

41. This school district is unique because of the reservation schools and the long distances children ride buses. In many situations parents or (1) parent work evening hours and are not home until very late if at all. In the 1st situation, I do not see parents willing to take time and mileage to pick up children at school when they have been previously bussed. I think a school based after school program would only work in the town schools.

42. School based programs would be very difficult due to it being a rural community and the distance between the schools and the communities.

43. In this area, many live in surrounding areas - as far as 8 miles, etc. - Busing or other transportation might have to be addressed as many parents car pool. It (after school care) is really needed. If done at the schools, some time should be allocated for homework or tutoring as many are unable to get help of any kind from parents.

44. Since our school is a country school and most of our children live out in the country, where would these services be provided? I'm sure not in the country.

45. I agree something needs to be done for latchkey kids, but I'm concerned about what my six year old will be doing if I stay after hours to supervise other latchkey kids.

46. My main concern is that the laws in New Mexico are not very clear. At what age is a child old enough to be responsible for their own care - let it be 15 min. - 2 hrs. after school.

47. I feel that the schools are taking on more and more parental duties. I do not believe this is in the best interest of the child or the schools. Emphasis, I believe, should be put back on the parent(s) for child care.

48. I'm glad someone is noticing the need - I would also like to see schools hire a sick kid sitter to stay with faculty children so teachers don't have to take the day off and pay a sub. Thanks for the questionnaire.

49. Facilities with a home like environment not available at school. 10-12 hrs a day is too long at school. Beds not available for resting or ill children. Schools are not babysitting service. It would require someone full time to take care of bookkeeping, messages, etc. Interruption to classes with messages.

50. I believe that after school care is the primary responsibility of the parents and that the local and state government should not fund nor provide care.

51. I feel that Public Schools are held responsible for far too much of "child care" now. In my opinion schools and school staff are (or should be) educators, not "baby sitters" or "care takers". Let's try to allow the responsibility for the "care taking" of children stay where it should be; on the parents' shoulders!

52. School have already assumed too much responsibility and involvement in managing school age students. By the end of the school day, teachers and students are ready for a change. In a day care setting, tutoring could be provided, if needed. This needs to be addressed outside the school setting.

53. I am a first year school nurse. Will a follow-up of the results be sent to participants?

54. I believe the school's responsibility is to teach children skills to take their place in society. The parents are to care for other phases of raising children.

55. In smaller communities, we do not have the latchkey problem as much as larger cities thank goodness.

56. I don't feel the state should make laws for this situation (latch children). It would be becoming too much of a martial state (1984). We're making our parents more and more less responsible for their responsibilities as parents.

57. And if the so called adult parent can't accept <u>their</u> responsibility to <u>their</u> child instead of dumping it on the school - how in the he-- do they expect the teenager that they complain of to accept any responsibility? Everyone complains that the teenage pregnancy rate is so high because teenagers are "not responsibile enough" but if parents are going to dump their responsibility on the schools, what kind of example are they setting for the teenager to follow? Schools should concentrate on teaching academic things like reading, math, spelling, etc. and the parents of this state need to concentrate on raising their children and that includes making arrangements for after school care!

58. This sounds like a very good idea. These children do need help. If you can send me additional information on things we can start doing now, I would appreciate it.

59. Public schools already are asked to do too much of the "parental" tasks. We are already spread too thin. This is a problem that is a <u>parental</u> responsibility and can best be met with other community resources.

60. This is a very important issue - Our children are at risk, <u>not only</u> in elementary school due to lack of supervision. Public education should not be involved in the latchkey issue.

61. Financial expense belongs to parents - if school facilities can be used to house and entertain children that should be the involvement of the state. Snacks, supervision, cost of entertainment or activities should come from funds parents pay for their child's care. However, many parents will choose to leave kids home alone if they have to pay. It may not solve the problem.

62. I can see that a child sitting service would be convenient for parents if it was located in the school building. Perhaps a school employee who needs additional income could manage it, but the service should be paid for by the parents. I do see problems arising in our rural area such as people not paying on time and not picking up their children on time, which we have a few who abuse

this now and not picking up their children at the time school is out. I would hate to see the public school system [be] burden[ed] with this. The next step would be 24 hour care and parents wouldn't have to accept any responsibility for their children.

63. I work in a 99% Indian student school and I feel the situation is very different. If mother works, there is G'ma or older sibling to watch the young ones. I'm in a middle school and have 6th-8th grades.

64. I feel that financial provision should be shared by the state and local government for day care services for latchkey children. State legislature should be involved to the extended need for financial provision. The day care administration and policy decisions should have local autonomy, because the local people know what works best in their community. Legislature is very often swayed in their decision by political pressure which results in totally asinine mandates. An example is the PL142 mandating an education for the severely mentally handicapped children who in essence require cutodial care. Yet the local Educational agencies have to provide this service. Thank you for including me on your survey and for the pen.

65. There is a Boys/Girls Club 2 blocks from my elementary school - and it is heavily used! I'm sure my school community would use a school based program. We will be implementing more Self-Help/Life Skills this year also. Thank you.

66. One problem in our district is that students are bused so far. The majority of them live from 10 to 50 miles from the schools. Those who work in those outlying area probably would not want to come those distances to pick up their children after work.

67. I'm with the high schools and I have no contact with younger children.

68. My school serves a totally Native American population. All students are bused to the school which is located several miles outside of the pueblo. A school based offer care program is probably not feasible for this particular building. The population I serve probably does not perceive this as a problem at this time. I answered these questions for my building. My opinions would be different in an urban setting.

69. RE: #12 - Teachers stated the Weekly Reader has these topics and they are discussed.

70. K-3rd would not require same solution and care as 4-6. K-3 needs some type of day care or sitter. 4-6 could benefit from a call in service. It is not the government's responsibility to provide care - however a helpful position would be one of resources - studying and facilitating types of care (particularly new types of care).

71. Since we have a majority of latchkey children in our school, this is an issue which needs to be addressed.

72. Campfire seems to work well at one of my schools - however the main opposition to a school based program at my other school is the administrator. Also parents should be assisted with payment like on a sliding scale. However, if they are able to pay some, it helps them be more responsible. There are low income families that are working or going to school to better themselves and day care expense is a burden and concern for them.

73. High school students could be utilized in helping to staff such programs - with adult supervision. This would provide 2 service - (1) supervised care for the elementary student and (2) job opportunities for the high school student.

74. Albuquerque probably has the best programs available in the state, but still many elementary schools have no set program. Now we have 3 and 4 year olds with disabilities in the school setting. Therefore, I think our needs will increase.

75. Thank you for your interest in this critical area of need. RE: question 7: The reason I would like to see local businesses and industry assume major responsibility for the funding of these programs is because businesses, being so money conscious, would probably demand high quality in return for their financial contributions. Also I think it is very positive for both the community and the business when businesses and industry are actively involved with the community in which they reside. One outstanding example of this in Albuquerque is the Ethicon Corp.

76. I am a high school nurse. Many of the questions do not relate to my immediate experience. I shall answer only those where I have strong feelings.

77. On question #4 - the best afterschool care would be a sitter hired by the parents. However, the most practical in view of the poverty of the area would be programs in the public schools with day care centers falling somewhere between the two.

78. I think latchkey children are primarily parents responsibility - they need attention. More and more we see these children needing counseling and nursing skills - too many of them for one person.

79. I believe we all need to be concerned about latchkey kids, however, parents must be made to assume more responsibility. Every year parents seem to expect the school to do more parenting. We must teach teenagers about parenting and parent responsibility and encourage "Planned Parenting."

80. I think education dollar needs to be EDUCATION. Schools are already seen as babysitters while Mom and/or Dad work... Schools should not be.

81. I think these kids that are left alone after school should have supervision: you never know when an emergency should arise. These children are too young. Also it would be very beneficial for the children, they can do their homework with a supervisor watching over them. A lot of children don't even do their homework with their parents.

82. I am sorry I cannot answer this survey as I have been working with retarded high school students for the past 10 years. Obviously our population does not fall into the category which you are studying.

83. I also work with the Side by Side Program (Handicapped - physical and/or mental) and there is very limited care for these special needs children after school.

84. Latchkey children require lots of attention - parents are gone 7 to 7 sometimes later. Parent ultimately responsible for their child.

85. My school is a high school so some of the questions were not directly applicable. In our school we do have a pre-school program divided into two sessions, an AM and PM of different children. Latchkey children and their care is of ultimate importance especially in today's society where both parents almost certainly have to work to keep up financially.

86. Our low-income children need a latchkey program - based on sliding scale - but then busing home could also be major concern.

87. Public Health Philosophy is to help people help themselves. A great deal is being asked of the schools to provide many extended services. These services are needed, but are the schools the best providers? Public school funding needs to improve teacher salaries to attract top-notch people to academia. If monies from school funds were diverted to extra programs, teachers would get short-changed again.

88. Programs are implemented without thought, funding, supervision, follow through.

89. I have a middle school (6-7-8) and many of them are latchkey kids and have responsibility for younger sibilings. Our school is in a drug-laden, violent, poor, difficult area!!!

90. If a program such as this was developed, I would like to see it licensed by the state and the staff licensed as well. It would be important for parents to know that qualified people were caring for their children. I do have Campfire care provided at my school and it is well attended. If funding was available, more children would be able to attend.

91. More and more community agencies and the government are assuming the roles that many parents are unwilling or unable to carry - such as sex education, baby sitting, school based clinics, etc. Parental roles should be encouraged, not taken up by the agencies.

Provide the means to support, instruct, educate and encourage parents to take on their parental roles and not assume these roles.

92. We do have a school based program established, sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Dept. It is before and after school. Parks Dept. staffs and maintains it.

93. I feel strongly that children under age 11 should not be left alone or responsible for younger sibilings. This is asking too much, too soon. We need to care for our children or society will certainly pay the price in years to come. Good luck in your efforts.

94. We have a Campfire program in our school as a before and after school care. It has not been a satisfactory program this year, even tho [sic] in the past it has been fairly successful.

95. Programs like Parks and Rec., Campfire and YMCA/YWCA who utilize space in schools may not be the best solution. Program should be funded by business contributions, charitable contributions and fees paid by parents. It should NOT be a government mandated service paid for by tax money!!

96. I am an administrator. Have answered questions I can - do not have a school per se but supervise our staff of 75 school nurses. Thanks for the pen. I'd like a copy of the study report please.

97. We have many small children who go home after school to stay alone - 5 year olds included.

98. I feel that it is the responsibilty of the parents to provide for child care after school. If not a day care center, church or some after school activity, then a friend could be asked to watch the child.

Comments
From
School Counselors

1. Our school offers a curriculum for latchkey children plus stronger awareness, child abuse, sexual abuse, drug abuse, etc. but this is not enough. Some after school something is needed. Keep me informed on what transpires re: this area.

2. We have previously surveyed the elementary children in our school and find that those students whose parent(s) are working have a close relative such as grandparents who care for them (youngsters) after school. Since our community is so rural and contains very limited work/job opportunities, most of our parents are home when students get home. However, I have seen latchkey work and feel that it is a wonderful program. I also strongly feel that staff should have early childhood background and child care training.

3. Inadequate day care facilities - and the ones that exist are too costly for many working parents - result is too many children who stay alone when ill or after school.

4. We have a YMCA school-based afterschool program which works very well. It is community supported and only involves the school in terms of space provided.

5. We have a very successful after school sponsored by the YMCA. We also have a very good church-sponsored program too.

6. The YMCA is in its 3rd year of an after-school program at every elementary school, and has experimented with a before school program at one school. I think they could offer you some valuable information on how this program has worked since its inception. Scholarships are available for families who need it.

7. A very much needed program. Parents, children, community as well as the schools will benefit from such a program.

8. Working parents need to have their children supervised. However, funding is critical for after school programs. Get the money and it can happen.

9. Since our illustrious State Government feels that educators are not worthy of a 3% raise, the child care that they could provide for teachers, alone, could be enough of a shot in the arm to make ends meet for at least another year. The morale of our schools is at an all time low simply because we feel that the Legislators don't give a damn about education; because they don't know a damn thing about education!

10. At one of my schools, 75% of the children are bussed from other very small communities. At the second school, a similar situation exists except all of the children come from primarily from 3 very small communities.

11. The school where I am employed is a Bureau of Indian Affiars Boarding School; however, we do have day students who are "latchkey" children. I feel this is a very important issue which needs to be addressed.

12. In my present position, latchkey children are not a worry what so ever. The children stay at the dorm from Monday morning until Friday afternoon and the ones that don't ride the bus. On the rare occasions when parents are not at home the children are returned to school and are checked into the dorm. Parents may pick them up or arrange for them to stay the night. Before this it was always quite a worry for teachers because children would tell us about experiences that were frightening. This is a serious problem and I do hope it can be solved. Because these are our students I firmly feel that schools share the responsibility of helping to insure their safety and well being.

13. Community involvement needs to be cultivated step-by-step utilizing all possible media - in both English and Spanish. Parents also need everything mentioned in #12. Cultural aspects need to be considered and included.

14. My school is participating in the grant program for after-school care. As a counselor, I have seen positive changes in those children since participating in the program as opposed to last year when they went home to face an empty house.

15. I hear glowing reports on the one school based program for care in our community. I feel sure that there is certainly a need there. I am not sure that all elementary administrators would endorse such a program because of the obvious responsibilities inherent in this kind of undertaking. If the principal and staff were enthusiastic, I feel the parents would certainly support it, and a need for good care would be met.

16. I believe the state or federal government should provide funds. In the long run it would save tax dollars by lessening the # of students who end up in Juvenile halls, etc. The staff should receive adequate training if they are not school personnel. It (the program) should be educational as well as enjoyable for the children, not just babysitting.

17. Our area is so spaced apart that we have many latchkey children - some we do not even know about. We also have to deal with cultural and different financial and social status of the family. The main thing is that there will probably be more positive on establishing a program here. Thank you for the pen too.

18. Our school is on a Reservation where we have many latchkey children. An after school program would not be feasible because of all the busing. Education of the children seems to be the only alternative at this time.

19. Question 3 - children in the upper elementary grades (4-5-6) could probably be home with directed supervision.

20. I would suggest parent (the ones who are not working) involvement in after school programs. Perhaps teenagers could be of help when rec. type activities are used or tutorial services. In our area, teens could always use part-time jobs and would be willing to help if they could earn a wage for their services. Parents could help with the screening of employees and the program plans. This could become a great community project with PTA, service clubs, etc. involvement. Our young children would be safe with their parents are working.

21. We currently have a before and after school program available at our school.

22. Although we currently have after-school programs for children in our community, they are not geared for the needs of children of school age (instead, for pre-schoolers) and are generally staffed by people with limited knowledge of the developmental needs of that age group.

23. I think that having well run programs after school is very important. I don't like kids going home alone and unattended.

24. We see a desperate need for help regarding before and after school children care. Many of our students are left here as much as 1 hour before school (w/o shelter or supervision). There is so little money available in our student's home for absolute necessities - day care does not fit that designation. Therefore attendance must be on a sliding scale basis to actually reach the at-risk cohort. I would be pleased to become a contact person for this project.

25. I coordinate a Wellness Program which is a preventative Physical and Mental Health Program. Every week each class receives 1/2 hour of Affective or Heatlth Education which includes safety, assertiveness, first aid, nutrition, cleanliness, self awareness and self concept enhancement, communication skills, cognitive training and learning to take responsibility. We run a Conflict-Management Program and also offer family counseling. There are also numerous groups including (1) Leadership, (2) Divorce, (3) Children of alcoholics, (4) Sexual molestation/abuse groups, (5) Weight and fitness groups, (6) Anger Group, (7) Friendship group, (8) Bully-victim, (9) L.D. Support, (10) Death group and (11) Illness group (terminal illness in family). There is a program that runs from 7 am to 6 pm for latchkey children run by YMCA but facilities are open to all students if additional support is needed and 5-10 staff members are on grounds at those times.

26. An Albuquerque city ordinance requires supervision for children 10 years or less. Violation may be viewed as neglect. I would support a similar state wide legislative effort, if we could also provide funds for establishing day care.

27. The whole queston of "day care" is an important issue in my community - especially with the proposal of the Welfare Reform Act.

28. I feel that there should be after school care. I feel that a large part of the financial responsibility should come from the business community which employees the parents. The staffing could be shared by the businesses and the public schools.

29. Latchkey kids are a reality. I am uncomfortable providing excessive state support when we don't even fund our school districts that well. Yet I know children sometimes suffer in latchkey situations. I still believe that the parents using school programs should help fund those programs. Their [sic] are many educators who pay for their own children's care. It seems ironic that we take care of everyone but the educator.

30. The school buildings are already in place - it makes sense both logically and financially to utilize them after school with some kind of recreation/day care program that will be within the means of most parents. Safety of children should be a major concern to all in this state including city and state government officials.

31. Your pen didn't work - no ink!

32. I do feel that there is a need for some sort of program for latch-key children. However, those of us who don't have children should not be expected to flip the bill for it.

33. Most of our parents work, both Mom and Dad, until 5:00 pm. The school ought to provide the space and the Legislature should fund qualified, willing staff members and college education seniors, etc. The 2 1/2 hour period of time after school can be educational safe and well supervised if children in New Mexico was the main priority in the state.

34. We have had an after school program at our school for the past four years. It has been staffed adequately. We have not had any complaints about the program. It is operated by the Campfire Council.

35. I am a school counselor, but not the one to whom this survey was addressed - she has retired. I hope you will keep us informed as to the progress of the study and the results of the survey.

36. I'm concerned that after school care be provided for lower income families - based on a sliding scale. Busing may need to be provided.

37. The school I am located at has an after school program from 3:30 - 5:30 for latchkey children. About 50 children out of 600 participate. No fees are charged. It is funded through the Albuq. Parks and Recreation Dept. Eighteen schools in Albuq. have this program. Activities include games, movies and field trips.

38. I have worked in the public sector with children for the past 12 years and I have become more concerned each year about services for children, parents and educators. My impression is that there has been a continual reduction of services in many areas. It is more difficult to arrange for social work services, psychotherapy, training workshops, and educational stimulations, special education assistance as cut off requirements have been raised and funds have dwindled. There is a great deal of talk about helping children in America but from my perspective most is just talk which does not find itself backed with funds.

39. The State should standardize Day Care Centers and provide approved training for the workers. The standards should apply good educational theories. The State should be responsible for seeing these standards are carried out and criteria are approved.

40. I see great need especially for parents in low and middle income groups who can't afford sitters or day care, don't get off work to transport children from one place to another and who work later than most places are open. Most children need relaxation and play after school and snack and some will need dinner. I don't see a need for much structure beyond safety requirements. I do see a need for equipment, art supplies, games, toys, T.V. and place for quiet. Perhaps activities and groups such as scouts, dance lessons soccer.... could be had on site allowing for voluntary attendance. Thanks for caring enough to do this. Many parents are desperate and their children are alone.

41. Good day care for children is a issue and the issue is the same for latchkey. There may be many after school care offered privately. However, after school care that encourages and enables children to get their homework done, that offers academic help, a good social/emotional environment is rare. I feel after school care connected with school at school site could provide a lot of benefits for students in terms of good academic, social/emotional growth and in continuity and security.

42. In smaller schools, the babysitter seems a good way to go. In some places Campfire is successful, in others it is not. It depends on the individual running the program.

43. I really like the idea of after school care for latchkey children. With so many mothers and fathers working today, a great number of elementary age children are going home to empty houses. I don't think it's very safe for young children to be left alone at home unsupervised.